Dudley
CHRONICLE
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COLLEGE CENTRE PARKING WORRY

Report by Clare Butler

FEARS have been raised that a £12 million building at Dudley College will reduce town centre parking.

The new Dudley Advance II will be built alongside the £9m Dudley Advance building that was opened earlier in the year.

The new 37,000 sq ft building will include workshops, classrooms, project spaces and support facilities around a four-storey hub called The Hanger.

But it is to be built on the temporary car park on Priory Road and councillors have raised concerns about the loss of 77 car parking spaces, predominately used by Dudley Council employees. The car park currently has 126 spaces, with 49 spaces intended to be put back for students and college staff.

Councillor Asif Ahmed, although supporting the college plans, said the building would play a 'major role' in the lack of parking in the area.

He said: "I use to go to Dudley College myself and I want it to get bigger and better. However, being built on the car park will play a major role in the lack of car parking in the town. The question is where will the people who currently park their cars there go?

Developed

"Although I am not against the application itself, I think there should be a plea to the college to think about a provision for the car parking that will be taken away."

Planning officials said that the car park, which has been 'temporary' for more than 10 years, was always intended as a site to be developed.

Ian Hunt, senior project engineer, said: "One hundred and twenty cars will have to find somewhere else to go. But Wolverhampton Street and Stafford Street parking is in walking distance and in the town centre there is plenty of room."

Planning documents say that the new centre will be a 'landmark for Dudley and its future regeneration'.

Councillor Keiran Casey, vice-chairman of the development control committee, said the building would provide 'an improvement to the town centre and education'. He added: "While the loss of car parking is arguable, there are other places to park in the town centre, and this centre will be an improvement."

Lowell Williams, Dudley College Principal, added: "This is another landmark development for the both the college and Dudley itself."

The site of Dudley College's Mons Hill campus, in Wrens Hill Road, has been put up for sale. The site, some of which is still being used by students, will be making way for housing.

Construction work has already begun on site with the college to move out of the remaining part of the site during the middle of 2016. A developer is being sought for another 37 homes.

SLIMMERS' CALENDAR WILL PILE ON POUNDS

Calendar girls – those taking part include Kay Bowen, Louise Peck and Sarah Westwood

THEY collectively lost more than 20 stone between them – now they are baring all to raise money for a life-saving piece of kit.

The women, who lost the pounds taking on the Cambridge Weight Plan, stripped off for a naked calendar which is now on sale.

Louise Peck, Kay Bowen, Nicky Evans, Karen Freeman, Tanya Mercer, Brigitte Rafferty, Kerry Salmon, Nicky Colyer, Tiffany Johnson and organiser Sarah Westwood hope to raise £2,000 for a new automated external defibrillator. The women are unsure where they will place the new defibrillator, but have said it will be local.

Ms Bowen, from Sedgley, said: "This calendar has been created by a team of Cambridge consultants and clients based in the West Midlands with photographs of successful slimmers who have collectively lost more than 20 stone."

With the shoot and calendar for charity, the group had to get as much of it done for as little as possible.

Wolverhampton-based Dark Lens Photographic Services provided the photo shoot free of charge while ALK Print provided the photographs.

Sarah Westwood, from Bushbury organised the fundraiser alongside Ms Bowen.

She said: "Myself and Kay who are the organisers are based in Wolverhampton and Sedgley.

"We haven't decided on a location for the equipment as of yet but it will definitely be within the local area."

To buy a calendar call 01536 403344.

FOOTBALL

Wolves icon Roy dies at age of 86

LEGENDARY Wolves centre forward Roy Swinbourne has died aged 86.

The striker, whose goals led the club to their first title in the 1953-54 season and provided the catalyst for the famous victory over Honved in 1954, died at a nursing home in Kidderminster on Sunday following a long battle with vascular dementia.

In his career, he made 230 appearances for the club, scoring 114 goals between 1945 and 1957. His wife of 62 years, Betty, 83, said: "He was the most kind man you could ever think of."

● Tribute – see page 36

ACCIDENT

Passengers hurt as car skids into bus

TWO people were taken to hospital after a car skidded into the side of a bus on a Stourbridge traffic island.

Emergency services were called to the roundabout at Chawn Hill at about 3.45pm on Sunday.

A blue Citroen Saxo car slid into a single-decker Travel West Midlands bus causing minor injuries to passengers in both vehicles. Stourbridge fire crew commander Ian Wright said two people were taken to Russells Hall Hospital for a check up.

CRIME

Yobs wrecked Age Concern's minibus

CHARITY bosses are calling for the public to help track vandals who stole their minibus and left it so badly damaged it can't be driven.

The white Iveco minibus with tail lift was taken from outside Age Concern's day centre in Green Lane, Halesowen. When recovered it was so badly damaged the charity are not sure if it can be used again.

Ken Turner, chairman of the charity, said: "These callous thieves need to be caught and punished."

He added: "We have made alternative arrangements to get the clients to where they need to be."

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Hit and run driver is facing jail sentence

A MOTORIST who killed a man as he was crossing the road was travelling at more than 20mph over the speed limit, police have revealed.

The findings came on the day 31-year-old Stourbridge man Omar Tariq pleaded guilty to causing death by dangerous driving.

Victim Peter Price, aged 39, from Quinton, was killed when he was hit by a white Mercedes E250 driven by Tariq in November last year.

At Wolverhampton Crown Court last week Tariq, 31, from Denton Road, Stourbridge, was told to prepare for a custodial sentence by Judge Kristina Montgomery QC.

He pleaded guilty to causing the death of Mr Price by dangerous driving in the crash on November 29 last year in Hagley Road West, Quinton, and also admitted driving without insurance.

After the hearing West Midlands Police said a black box fitted to the Mercedes revealed the car had been travelling at no less than 61mph when it struck Mr Price – even though the limit on the road was 40mph.

After ploughing into Mr Price, Tariq drove a further third of a mile before pulling on to Birch Lane and calling the police.

Tariq had not been permitted nor insured to drive the car which was a courtesy car loaned to his 23-year-old girlfriend, from Stourbridge.

Judge Montgomery told Tariq: "You should leave this court under no illusions, you will receive a sentence of immediate custody"

Tariq, who was conditionally bailed, will be sentenced on January 25.

His girlfriend, Parvinder Ubhi, 23, a health and safety officer, of Jardine Close, Stourbridge, was charged with permitting use of the vehicle without valid insurance and obstructing police by falsely claiming she was driving. She pleaded guilty to both offences at an earlier magistrates' hearing and received a 12-month community order with 150 hours unpaid work, 12 months supervision and was disqualified from driving for one year.

Green light for scheme to construct 900 homes

PLANS to build more than 900 homes on disused industrial land in Coseley have been approved by Dudley Council.

It means all the existing buildings on the 66-acre Coseley Park site would be demolished, other than the former Bean Motor car offices – making way for 925 homes and a 30,000 sq ft supermarket on the site in Sedgley Road West.

A new signalised junction will be put on Birmingham New Road to allow homeowners access. Two new sports pitches and a public amenity space and play area would also be added.

Councillor Andrea Goddard said: "I think it is fantastic for the local area and Dudley as a whole."

Councillor John Martin said: "It is a much-needed site, especially when we have a shortage of affordable housing."

In the future the land could provide a footbridge over the canal.

The site is made up of the Newey Business Park, Bean Road Industrial Estate and Wellington Industrial Estate.

Plans were initially lodged for an ecopark on the site in 2011 and included 200 homes, commercial and retail space. Planning permission was granted in 2012, but the scheme stalled after the development partner ran into commercial difficulties. It was subsequently shortlisted as one of the UK's first Housing Zones Skelton Group.

Councillor Keiran Casey, Development Control Committee vice-chairman, said: "This is about bringing affordable housing to the area, which will help industry too."

Just two-and-a-half years for knife attack

A 15-year-old who stabbed a man six times after an argument on a bus has been locked up for just two-and-a-half years.

The youth, from Dudley, exchanged words with 29-year-old Carl Chamberlain aboard the Number 1 bus in Burton Road earlier this year.

The confrontation escalated after the teenager punched Mr Chamberlain's partner, Jaimie Fereday. In the ensuing fight, the teenager, then 14, stabbed Mr Chamberlain six times using a knife he claims he picked up off the floor, leaving him with two collapsed lungs.

At Wolverhampton Crown Court last week the boy – who cannot be named for legal reasons – was sentenced to two and a half years in custody having admitted wounding with intent.

Prosecuting, Mr Howard Searle, said it was around 9pm on January 2 when Mr Chamberlain and Miss Fereday boarded the bus and sat opposite the youth. The dispute started after Mr Chamberlain accused the boy of making remarks about his partner. Another passenger was able to get between the two, preventing a physical altercation, and the teenager used his phone to call relatives and asked to be picked up.

Blade

Mr Searle said Miss Fereday got off the bus and was punched by the teenager. In the resulting struggle Mr Chamberlain was stabbed six times with the blade penetrating up to five centimetres deep.

The boy was driven away by a relative but Miss Fereday was able to take down the car's registration. The youth was initially charged with attempted murder. After the charge was changed to wounding with intent he entered a guilty plea on the basis he did not bring the knife but found it on the bus.

Defending, Mr Gurdeep Garcha, said: "This young man was not looking for trouble. He did not take the knife to the scene."

The court heard the teenager has already served the equivalent 12 months having spent nearly four months in a secure unit and 253 days subject to curfew.

Judge Michael Challinor said: "The victim could have lost his life."

The youth received no separate penalty for the assault against Miss Fereday.

Zoo visit can be sealed with a fish

Sea lion Tania with senior keeper Jodie Dryden, of Wolverhampton, at Dudley Zoo

ANIMAL lovers can get even closer to Dudley Zoo's newest arrivals as visitors will be allowed rare access to the sea lion enclosure to feed them.

The Close Encounter event will allow people to walk up to the zoo's five sea lions with a bucket of fish and feed the 40-stone creatures their favourite food.

The offer has been launched after the zoo boosted its number of sea lions during the year and is available for £95 for two people. The feeding experience lasts around half an hour. Four new arrivals joined during 2015 to provide 27-year-old female Cleo with some much-needed company.

At the end of March, 18-year-old female Deisy – the first foreign animal to be transferred to the zoo via the Channel Tunnel – arrived from the south of France.

Just a few days later, 14-year-old male Oba joined from the French Riviera. Then in October, two more females Marina, aged 19, and 18-year-old Tania translocated from Toulouse. Now visitors will be able to step into the enclosure with the clever creatures, who are able to'talk', wave and nod their heads on command.

They have already become popular additions since their arrival at the Castle Hill attraction.

Marketing manager Andrea Hales said: "People taking part will learn lots about these interesting animals and get to feed them a bucket of fish."

Delays loom with £500k roadworks

MOTORISTS are being warned to expect delays as a £500,000 scheme to improve bus services and ease traffic jams around Merry Hill shopping centre starts in the new year.

The five-month project includes traffic light improvements and upgrades to bus shelters with the latest digital passenger information. Dudley Council will also be carrying out a major resurfacing programme at the same time.

Work will begin in High Street and Coppice Lane, Quarry Bank, on January 11 and be completed in June. Officials say it will improve journey times for those travelling to and from Merry Hill, Brierley Hill and the Waterfront.

Road resurfacing of the A4036 junction with The Boulevard and Coppice Lane starts on February 15.

Brewery's ale trail with shirt reward

A BLACK Country brewery is running its fifth real ale trail. People who visit the 20 Black Country Ales' pubs to do the trail will get a free polo shirt. Collectors' cards are available and need to be stamped at each pub between from January 1 and the end of March.

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Funding is needed for park work to go ahead

A CRADLEY park faces a revamp with refurbished changing rooms, a new floodlit games area and car park.

Dudley Council planners approved the plans for Homer Hill Recreation Ground, in Homer Hill Road.

However, Councillor Richard Body says a funding grant of up to £500,000 will be needed to enable the work to be carried out. A £250,000 grant was secured in 2009 to build new changing rooms – but it wasn't enough.

Councillor Body, chairman of the friends of the park group, said: "The money from 2009 was great but it was not enough. We are hopeful that the grant put forward from The Football Trust will be secured in the new year.

"It will cost around £360,000 to build new changing rooms and implement extra parking.

"We have a number of football teams that use the site and the current temporary changing rooms are just not up to scratch."

The site currently has a pavilion, play area and basketball courts which planning documents say 'are in a poor state of repair'.

Under new plans the site will see upgraded sporting facilities, including the refurbishment of the current pavilion into new changing rooms.

The floodlit multi-use games area will have perimeter fencing and be situated near the additional car parking that can be assessed via Homer Hill Road. The grant will be put in this month with hopes of it being approved by March and work completed by the end of 2016.

Motorcyclist dies in road accident

A MOTORCYCLIST has died after being involved in a crash with two cars in Rowley Regis.

The crash happened at about 5pm on Monday in Oldbury Road.

West Midlands Ambulance Service spokesman Murray McGergor said: "A paramedic and the CARE Team, which includes a pre-hospital doctor, arrived on scene in under six minutes of the call. They found the rider was in cardiac arrest and immediately started resuscitation.

"They carried out advanced life support but sadly, despite their best efforts, it was not possible to save him and he was confirmed dead at the scene.

"No-one in either of the cars was injured."

Eight houses are given approval

COUNCILLORS have approved plans for eight homes on Stourbridge Road, Dudley. The houses will be built by KP Property Developments beside the stretch of dual carriageway close to Scotts Green Island.

Campaigners win battle to rescue church

19th century St John's Church in Dudley

CAMPAIGNERS have won their eight-year battle to take over a landmark Dudley church so they can re-open it to the public.

St John's Church Preservation Group has now agreed a lease for the listed building in Kates Hill.

The church shut in 2002 due to safety concerns and for the past eight and a half years volunteers have been raising funds to protect the site with the aim of it again being used by the community.

Recent surveys have shown the nave and chancel at the church, which opened in 1840, are structurally sound.

For the past year, the preservation group has been in talks with the Diocese of Worcester and the Church Commissioners to lease the building so they can begin restoration work. The arrangements have now been finalised and the lease will be signed in the coming weeks.

The group anticipates spending around £150,000 on basic restoration work and plans to launch funding appeals now the lease is finalised.

Chairman Deb Brownlee said: "We're now just waiting for a lease signing and key handover date, and we aim to invite the public and supporters to come and watch the handover. People have supported and helped us for so long, they deserve to see for themselves for the final outcome of nearly nine years hard slog."

Group patron Professor Carl Chinn said: "What a credit this is to St John's Church Preservation Group and their supporters from the Black Country and beyond. Very soon a great community project can finally begin."

Legion d'Honneur is awarded to veterans

THEY arrived with thousands of their comrades on the beaches of Normandy 71 years ago to complete one of the most remarkable feats in wartime history.

The D-Day landings started on June 6, 1944, and saw the Allied Forces carry out the largest ever seaborne invasion.

Now servicemen from the Black Country who were there on that day have been awarded with the Legion d'Honneur, the highest decoration awarded in France.

French President Francois Hollande decided last year, during the 70th anniversary of the landings, the country needed to do more to thank those who had fought so bravely to help free the country from Nazi control.

Jack Hill, 92, from Quarry Bank, and Dennis Nightingale, 91, from Perton, both received their medals from Robert Mille, an Honorary consul based in Birmingham.

The ceremony, which also honoured Alf Dimmock, 90, from Quarry Bank, who is yet to receive his medal, was held in Christ Church, Quarry Bank.

Mr Hill, who served with Navy's British Yard Mine Sweepers, said: "I was with the inshore mine-sweepers but I never actually landed on the beaches.

Thousands

"We had a three-inch gun at the front and cannons on port and starboard, but we were under strict instructions not to fire them unless absolutely necessary.

"We kept watch along the coast just up from Gold Beach. We left from the Isle of Wight and there were thousands of vessels and boats. It was quite a sight.

"My wife was actually secretary for the Royal Engineers at the time and was waving off the boats but I didn't know her then, which was quite a coincidence."

Mr Hill said he only joined the Royal Navy in 1943 because he had previously been working in a reserved occupation, which had kept him out of the forces.

"I ended up based in Malta from most of the war and my younger brother, Frank, joined me too," he said.

"I'll never forget when the war was over and the first thing we saw was Ireland. It really is an emerald island when you see it from a boat and that vision has always stuck in my head."

Veterans Jack Hill and Dennis Nightingale were presented with their D-Day medals at Christ Church

Mr Nightingale was the veteran who first made contact Mr Mille to get the medals presented on December 18.

He also served with the mine-sweepers and was one of the first to land on the beaches. "We arrived at 3am but it was by mistake really because we were grounded," he said. "We had to shut the ship down and remain in complete silence, hoping no one would spot us.

"I worked as a mine-sweeper and it was our job to go out in a wooden boat and use electro-magnetism to blow up the mines. We blew 23 up in one day."

Alf Dimmock, 90, from Quarry Bank, was with The Desert Rats and was aged just 18 when he landed in Normandy.

"I was a private and I remember everything being very quiet at first," he said. " I was there for six days before I was shot in the wrist. The bullet went straight through and I was sent home."

Mr Mille, who presented the medals, said after the 70th anniversary of the D-Day landings it was decided in France that more had to be done to remember the heroes.

"All they ever say is they did their duty but the French President decided that, as a country, we needed to do more than just say thank you," he explained.

The Reverend David Hoskins, rector of the Brierley Hill team, who led the service, said it had been an honour to be part of the event.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Old wine bar will become restaurant

A SHOP which was previously a wine bar will be turned into a restaurant after Dudley Council's Development Control Committee approved plans.

The shop conversion in High Street, Quarry Bank, has been refused more than twice before, due to concerns of cooking odours and noise disturbance. This time highways agents and Environmental Health and Trading Standards officers raised no objections.

The restaurant will seat around 40 people and is proposed to be open between 5pm and 11pm Monday to Sunday, including public holidays.

Drivers escape serious injuries

DRIVERS of a BMW and a Porsche 911 escaped serious injury in a smash which left the BMW in a hedge and the 911 with substantial damage.

The crash at the junction of the A449 and Doctors Lane in Kingswinford happened at about 2.50pm on Monday.

Ambulance service spokesman Murray MacGregor said: "The 29-year-old BMW driver was shaken but otherwise unhurt. The 35-year-old Porsche driver had a burn to his right forearm but didn't want to go to hospital to have it assessed further."

Sign up for new craft workshops

A NEW programme of craft workshops is taking place at Artspace Dudley. People can make screen printed bags on January 7 and have a go at creative crafts on January 8.

There will be the chance to make winter floral arrangements on January 14 and celebration cards on January 15.

All sessions cost £4 and run from 10.30am to 12,30pm. To book a workshop, call 07825 194160, or email.artspacedudley@live.co.uk

Dental surgery makes way for seven homes

A DENTIST'S surgery in Netherton will be demolished and replaced with homes.

Council planners have given the green light for five apartments and two bungalows to be built on the site of Bhandal Dental Practice in Marriott Road.

A previous demolition bid was thrown out over concerns a distinctive building would be lost but planning officers said the building had 'low significance'.

Bird trapped in tree

A BIRD of prey trapped in a tree in Lower Gornal managed to free itself and fly away. A fire crew was called by the RSPCA to Summergate at 11am on Tuesday, December 22 and planned to use an aerial platform to free it, but the buzzard untangled itself in the high winds.

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THE BEST OF PETER RHODES

THE art of successful public relations is to choose your figures wisely. For example, it is reported that nine out of ten hospitals are short of nurses. This is bad news, but only because the unit of measurement is individual nurses. A smart PR operator, noting the size of so many NHS employees, would point out that the total national weight of nurses is actually rising and the tonnage-per-patient ratio has never been higher. Another success story. More chocolates, sister?

I WROTE last week about how moon landings were routine in the 20th century. A reader reminds me that on one Apollo mission in 1971, having run out of sensible things to do on the moon, astronaut Alan Shepard smuggled his golf kit on the mission and drove a golf ball, as he put it, "for miles and miles and miles." May the "fore!" be with you.

WE Brits are a bit shy about our national identity. We don't put our nation's name on postage stamps. We don't know all the words to our national anthem. And we certainly don't have a national dress. Or so I thought until Miss Great Britain, confusingly called Nena France, popped up at the Miss Universe contest in Las Vegas wearing what we are assured is British national dress. It consists of a bejewelled red, white and blue basque, fishnet tights, thonged sandals and enormous showgirl feathers towering over one's head. I've ordered mine already.

HERE'S a lovely Xmas present for Prince Charles and his wife, a full-page feature in the Daily Mail headlined: "We could do a lot worse that Camilla as our Queen." And in the Sunday Times, another headline: "Admit it: We've come to love Camilla." Expect more of the same. It is part of the softening-up process to persuade the nation, after the Queen's death, to accept Camilla not as queen consort, as the Palace has always promised, but as Queen Camilla.

THE truth is that the queen-consort ruse was nothing more than a temporary measure to placate the Diana fan club. I bet Camilla's queenly crown has already been ordered.

NEW research suggests there was some truth in that old British marching song, to the tune of Colonel Bogey. Records from before the war reveal that Hitler had one undescended testicle. Then what of Himmler? Was he, as the same song suggests, very similar? And was Goebbels entirely lacking?

I RECENTLY suggested that in the first Star Wars movie, C3PO delivered Princess Leia's message. It was, of course, R2D2. Apologising to robots; has it come to this?

Don't miss Peter Rhodes every Monday to Friday in your Express & Star

Courier jailed after cocaine found in car

A DRUGS courier from Dudley has been locked up for four years after £100,000 worth of cocaine was found in his car.

Gaganveer Bahia, 24, had almost a kilogram of the class A drug in a Volkswagen Golf he was driving through Cumbria on November 26. At Carlisle Crown Court last week he pleaded guilty to possession with intent to supply. Bahia, of Hillman Drive, received a four-year jail sentence from Recorder Kevin Grice.

Bahia was stopped by police on the motorway near Carlisle. "They spoke to the defendant, who gave a false name and also gave a false date of birth," said Mr Gerard Rogerson, prosecuting.

An officer detected a strong smell of cannabis. Bahia said that was because a relative had smoked a joint earlier in the day. Officers located 979g of 'white powder' in a passenger footwell. This was found to be cocaine with a purity of 57 per cent. A provisional estimate of the drug value was said to be almost £100,000.

Because of the high purity level, the cocaine could have been 'bulked out' before being distributed in individual street deals, increasing its value 'probably to a factor of three'.

Mr Baz Bhatia, defending, said Bahia had pleaded guilty on the basis that he was a courier and got involved after he found himself in financial difficulties.

Recorder Grice accepted that Bahia was an intelligent young man and was sorry for what he had done. But said: "You knew what you were getting yourself into. You must pay the price for it."

Thief stole memories of my dead husband

By Richard Guttridge

A GRIEVING widow has spoken of her pain after her home was burgled as she sat at her dying husband's bedside.

The 63-year-old – heartbroken after just losing the man she loved – arrived back home to find it had been ransacked by callous burglars. She had spent the day at Dudley's Russells Hall Hospital so she could be with her husband during his final hours.

At the same time, thieves were breaking into her home.

An iPad, a digital camera, and an iPhone, which contained priceless photos of the couple together, were all stolen as well as jewellery and hundreds of pound in cash which were intended to be Christmas presents for the family.

Police have launched an investigation and released CCTV images of a young man and a white van.

The woman, who lives in Oldwinsford and wishes to remain anonymous, said: "My husband died at 7.30pm.

Disbelief

"I was going to stay the night but at about 2am I said I wanted to go home. I got back at 2.15am, opened the door and it was just upside down. I was completely on my own.

"The police said they took their time, they gained entry through the back door. They were pretty thorough."

She said she was in disbelief following a tumultuous few hours in which her world was turned upside down.

The widow has appealed to the thieves to return the sentimental items.

"I've lost my husband and now I've lost part of us in memories," she said.

The couple had been married for seven years and the victim's husband died following a battle with cancer.

Police are appealing for anyone with information to call them on 101.

Tammi has her 14in-locks lopped off

Tammi Alloway-Jones, of Cradley Heath, loses her locks for a good cause at Unique Hair Design & Beauty in Brierley Hill

A SEVEN-year-old Kingswinford schoolgirl had a whopping 14 inches of her hair cut to donate to a cancer charity which provides wigs to children.

Tammi Alloway-Jones first thought of the idea back in September with her aunt, Faye Alloway, 28, and mother Claire, 35. She thought because her hair was so long, rather than just have it cut off, it could be donated to a good cause.

Hairdresser Faye cut the hair of Tammi, who goes to Crestwood Park School,at Unique Hair Designs and Beauty in Turners Lane, Brierley Hill. She is giving the hair to The Little Princess Trust, which provides wigs for children having cancer treatment.

Mother Claire said: "I think it's a fantastic thing what Tammi has done and I couldn't be any prouder of her. She was more excited rather than nervous and loved all the pictures being taken. She really couldn't have been any more at ease.

"She was only meant to have 10 inches cut off but ended up having 14, but she didn't mind. Little Princess Trust is an incredible charity which helps so many kids going through such a terrible time. Tammi had her heart set on giving the hair to them. We posted it off and she'll be receiving a certificate from them thanking her for her efforts. She loves her new hair and keeps wanting to have a different style to go to school with."

To donate to Tammi's fundraising visit mydonate.bt.com/fundraisers/tammiallowayjones

One in three drinkers still over limit in the morning

ALMOST one in three people in the West Midlands have admitted to driving the morning after when they believed they may still be over the drink-drive limit from the night before, according to a new study.

The research, commissioned by Honda (UK) and AlcoSense Personal Breathalysers, investigated attitudes towards drinking and driving over the festive period.

It found more than one-in-five Christmas party-goers in the West Midlands predict that they will have six or more alcoholic drinks – with a third of this group planning on knocking back eight or more, putting them at real risk of being over the limit the following day.

It also found that more than two-thirds of those within the region intend to 'pre-load' with one or more drinks before arriving at the party.

Furthermore, despite being the most aware of the morning after drink-drive risk, the 25-34 year old age group – nationwide – are most likely to get behind the wheel before 9am the following day.

More than one in five admitted that they would do so, even if they suspected they were over the drink-drive limit.

The research was commissioned by Honda (UK) and AlcoSense Personal Breathalysers. Philip Crossman, managing director of Honda (UK) said: "We simply want people to be safe on the roads as many just don't consider the effects of alcohol still in their system the morning after."

Experts hopeful on theatre future

EXPERTS were hoping to add weight to a business plan to save Dudley Hippodrome before its New Year's Eve deadline.

Members of the friends of Dudley Hippodrome formed with other enthusiasts and industry experts to create a new steering group.

They believe they were able to add weight and detail to the friends' group's business plan which was dismissed by Dudley Council bosses.

Steering group chairman Dave Mundon works in the hospitality industry and owns a cafe at The Waterfront, in Brierley Hill.He says the group was working to have a revised proposal with the council before the cut-off point.

Members are hopeful of creating a full detailed plan in the new year.

History of castle is given at library talk

HISTORIAN Max Keen is giving a talk on the history of Dudley Castle next week.

He will be at Kingswinford Library in Market Street on Tuesday, January 5. The hour-long talk starts at 5.30pm. Admission is £3.

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Rotary club round off a great year of fundraising

MORE than £16,000 has been raised by generous fundraisers towards a village rotary club's charitable causes.

Fun runs, quizzes and Santa sleigh tours were held to help raise money across Kinver, Enville and surrounding areas.

Kinver Rotary Club has led the fundraising efforts over the past three months. Members, led by Kinver Rotary President Roy Sanders, took their annual Santa sleigh around to meet residents in the villages over the festive season.

The visits raised £6,400 and also stopped off at the Mary Stevens Hospice Santa Jog, Prestwood Care Home, Kingswinford shopping centre, the Aldi store in Wollaston, and The Ridge School, in Wollaston, St. John's Primary School, in Swindon, Brierley Hill Primary School and Goldthorn Park Primary School in Wolverhampton.

This was combined with cash raised at events including the newly renamed Two Villages Run this autumn.

The event attracted more than 250 runners with cash raised from the race totalling a record £4,500, which went to Dudley-based charity Action Heart.

Rotary club members and friends also dug deep to spend £2,100 on items donated to the club's charity auction and in November 160 people took part in the Children in Need quiz hosted by Strictly Come Dancing announcer Alan Dedicoat raising £2,906.

Heritage building to be demolished

AN HISTORIC building in Dudley will be flattened to make way for seven new homes.

Planners approved a scheme that will see a 'distinctive' 1930s structure, which currently houses a dental surgery, being demolished.

The building in Marriott Road, Netherton will be replaced with five apartments and two bungalows after plans were given the green light by Dudley Council with 16 conditions applied.

A report to the planners stated: "Whilst the development would result in the loss of a heritage asset the building is of low significance from a historic and architectural perspective and the site has little archaeological potential."

Former depot site being developed

PLANS have been lodged for 12 homes on the site former council maintenance depot in Dudley.

R A Investments Ltd has submitted proposals for land off Meadow Road to Dudley Council.

Thug hurled bottle at his ex-partner

A THUG showed his 'true colours' when he threw a glass bottle at his ex-partner while breaching a restraining order by seeing her, a court heard.

Michael O'Sullivan also bit Stacey Broadhouse's phone and threw it at a wall before taking £40 from a savings jar and fleeing police.

At Wolverhampton Crown Court, the 25-year-old, who left Miss Broadhouse with a one centimetre cut on her head, was jailed for three years.

O'Sullivan, of no fixed address, pleaded guilty to actual bodily harm, breach of a restraining order, criminal damage and theft.

Prosecutor Phillip Brunt told the court that the pair had a two-year-old son, and O'Sullivan had been jailed for 18 months in 2013 for another offence against Miss Broadhouse, who lived in Dudley.

He said: "On October 9 this year, he went to her home and asked to speak to her. She allowed him into the house and they were talking.

"They were drinking a bottle of WKD, but they started to argue. He was pushing her around and throwing her, and when she screamed he told her to shut up.

"He then threw an empty bottle at her which hit her on the side of the face. Then he took her phone, he bit it and then threw it against a wall. She then ran out of the house, banged on a neighbour's door and asked them to call the police. The police arrived shortly after but he had already gone.

"The bottle made a one centimetre wound to her head, which may have been a small wound but left her with blood dripping down her face.

"He surrendered himself to police a few days later."

Mr Brunt also said that O'Sullivan had a string of previous offences committed against Miss Broadhouse, including battery and criminal damage.

Defence barrister Richard Davies said: "He threw the bottle recklessly rather than with intent to harm. It was a moment of madness."

Judge Kristina Montgomery QC told O'Sullivan: "You went to her house to try and continue to control her, and it didn't take long for your true colours to come to the fore."

Homes to be built on derelict industrial land

A RUN-DOWN industrial estate is to be demolished and more than 300 homes built in its place under plans to regenerate part of Cradley Heath.

Factory units off Woods Lane and Macarthur Road will be bulldozed to allow a new housing estate comprising of 351 homes to be created.

Sandwell Council has been handed more than £5 million from the Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership in support of the plan.

The cash will be used to flatten the derelict buildings and construct a link road to aid the major development across a nine-acre site.

The council has already received the go-ahead to demolish the buildings, with a full application for the homes expected to be lodged within weeks.

The plans form part of a vision to restore the Woods Lane area of Cradley Heath, near the town's train station, an area mostly of derelict factory units.

Part of the site which has bee designated 'local importance for nature conservation' status will be retained to form part of the community space which will accompany the housing along the River Stour.

Conservation

Once the site is cleared, the council will then look to get a developer on board to deliver the homes.

Cradley Heath councillor Julie Webb said the development would be a major boost for the town.

"We are really chuffed to bits with these plans," she said.

"It will bring footfall into the town centre and it is an ideal spot for commuters."

"People in Cradley Heath will be really happy with this.

"The local authority is going to spend a significant amount of money and investment down there is long overdue."

Sandwell Council has been awarded £5.14m from the Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership to conduct demolition work of the industrial units and to construct a new road access to facilitate the development of 351 dwellings.

The scheme forms the latest part of Sandwell Council's vision to improve derelict parts of the borough.

A similar regeneration has taken place in West Bromwich.

Tango image strictly picture perfect

Award-winning picture, Argentine Tango, by Smethwick Photographic Society member, Peter Siviter

TAKE two dancers from Buenos Aires, add a back drop from Havana and then tweak the colours. The result is this award-winning picture taken by Smethwick Photographic Society member Peter Siviter.

The retired 74-year-old, who has been a keen photographer since 1978, came away from the World Cup for photographers with full marks and a bronze medal.

And his club did even better by beating 197 groups from across the globe to claim the overall first prize at the competition organised by FIAP, The International Federation of Photographic Art. It includes more than 85 countries and nearly one million individual photographers.

Mr Siviter, from Rock, near Bewdley, who worked as a business intelligence manager at Russells Hall Hospital, beat 4,000 hopefuls to bronze with Argentine Tango.

He said: "A lot of my pictures are of scenery. I also travel around the country taking pictures of punk-rockers and goths, people who stand out.

"The female dancer in this picture from Buenos Aires was wearing a blue dress and the man was in black but I thought purple would give the picture a more subtle tone. I also did a bit of work on the lighting and added the Havana backdrop."

NEWS IN BRIEF

Holiday camps for canal volunteers

CANAL restoration working holidays are being held on the Lapal Canal between Halesowen and Birmingham next summer.

The Waterway Recovery Group is teaming up with Lapal Canal Trust to carry out work at Harborne Wharf on the old Dudley No 2 Canal.

Canal camps will run from July 30 to August 6 and August 6-13. The main task next summer will be to repair the wharf walls.

Camps cost £63 per person, aged 18 an up. Book at www.wrg.org.uk or call 01494 783 453.

Marriage break-up councillor resigns

A LEADING Conservative has resigned from Dudley Council for personal reasons.

Tory group leader Councillor Patrick Harley said Kingswinford North and Wall Heath councillor Natalie Neale's decision had been taken following a marriage break-up.

The mother-of-three, was elected to the authority in May 2014.

Dudley Council director, Philip Tart, said: "A decision on the vacant Kingswinford North and Wall Heath ward seat will be made in the New Year."

Store's Christmas fun for charities

A SUPERMARKET has raised more than £2,000 for local charities and organisations.

Sainsbury's in Amblecote raised £2,545 from their festive activities including a mini craft fair and tombola and a carol singing weekend.

The store also invited groups to help customers pack their bags, which raised £1,022.

The money is going to The Black Country Food Bank and Wellcat Charity.

Guided tours prove popular at brewery

A BLACK Country brewery will be running guided tours throughout 2016.

The hour-long tours of Holden's Brewery in Woodsetton take place on the first Saturday of each month and all places for the February tour have been snapped up.

It costs £12.50 and includes a commemorative glass and a chance to sample the Holden's range of ales.

Holden's celebrated its centenary in 2015.

It's mirth from Mitch

COMEDIAN Mitch Benn will be performing at Stourbridge Town Hall in April. He regularly features on BBC Radio 4's The Now Show and has his own show Mitch Benn's Crimes Against Music on the national station. Tickets are on sale for his show Don't Believe A Word on April 26 at 8pm.

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IN MY VIEW
with Mark Andrews

Apprentice throws up boastful candidates

A REPORT this week claimed 90 per cent of Britain's hospitals were understaffed because they are struggling to recruit enough nurses.

The survey comes a month after David Loughton, chief executive of the Royal Wolverhampton Hospitals NHS Trust, said the biggest threat to the future of the NHS was not a lack of money, but a shortage of suitably trained staff.

In years gone by, the solution would have been in Mr Loughton's hands as in the past, hospitals ran their own training schools where new recruits were taught their skills.

That is now but a memory, after somebody had the bright idea that all new nurses have to go through university before they are deemed ready to perform full nursing duties, with two in three applicants being turned down because there are not enough places.

Presumably, that is what the former Prime Minister meant by education, education, education. A great way to meet a political target of getting 50 per cent of all young people into university, but a lousy way of running a health service.

■■■

ABOUT a month ago, I took a long weekend in Lanzarote to enjoy a bit of winter sunshine. It was only a three-night stay, but even so, I needed a decent-sized suitcase and a flight bag as well.

So how come the candidates on The Apprentice, who are signing up to 12 weeks living in the same house, each takes with them only a dainty little suitcase – on wheels, of course – to last them the duration of the series?

Despite finding space for the manicure sets and hair straighteners which they all seem to find obligatory, they manage to have all their belongings neatly packed up ready for each time they find themselves in the boardroom. My business plan would be for those special suitcases which are bigger inside than out.

■■■

BUT wasn't it nice to see The Apprentice won by a lad with a touch of humility, and a desire to learn?

The series has produced its fair share of braggarts and bigmouths over the years. There has been Philip "Pantsman" Taylor who declared himself the Elvis Presley of business, and the ever-loveable Katie Hopkins who has made a career out of spewing her bile on Twitter. This series it was Richard Hill, the David Brent soundalike who branded himself as "the Swiss army knife of business". Few people would have argued he was a bit of a tool.

And what do all these sneering, leering, "big characters" have in common? Not one of them has won. The moral is, if you want to make boastful, over-blown claims on your audition tape, you might indeed win a place in the series. But don't be surprised to be 'fired' once you have served your entertainment value.

Officers at under threat Wolverhampton Central Mosque

Pavlo Lapshyn – mosque bomber

When rioting hit the streets of Wolverhampton

Police chief talks of triumphs and regret

Chris Sims, the region's most senior police officer for eight years, is soon to retire, as ROB GOLLEDGE reports

FOR more than eight years Chris Sims has been a Chief Constable. First at Staffordshire and then West Midlands, he has been one of the country's most senior police officers for 16 years.

"I think people will be surprised how operational it is," the 57-year-old says in his last interview before retiring in a couple of weeks.

"A lot of the authority for deploying tactics sits with the Chief Constable. So I get to be involved with that but at the same time you are running an organisation of 10,000 people and half a billion pounds so it is equally a management task and managing relationships with partners locally, central government other forces, and juggling all of those things.

Obvious

"From my perspective doing that successfully you need to have a clear view of what you want to achieve otherwise you get caught up in the here and now. My view has been if we are not about protecting people what are we here for? All staff and police must put the public first."

Mr Sims' tenure at the top of West Midlands Police – the country's second-largest force – has coincided with a huge programme of budget cuts worth £130 million since 2010 because of government austerity.

Despite the loss of 3,000 police officers and staff, he believes the force is in a strong position, yet, as reported recently, he admits the police can no longer respond to every call in person.

"You can always do more with more people – that is obvious.

"We managed to get in a pattern where we were changing the way we worked quicker than we were losing staff – so we managed with responding to the public and crime, but with the sense that if you do not change faster than you shrink, you have a real problem.

Chief Constable Chris Sims shares his views before retiring in the New Year

"Terrorism was the only area that was protected financially for obvious reasons. I think we were able to take a lot of the pain of job losses from the areas that were not impacting on the service and protection of the public. I am not sure we could have continued that for another five years of cuts.

"We were in the throws of how we remodel neighbourhood and response policing. That is now for my successor to think through.

"The plan we did for 2020 was certainly a response to austerity but also primarily a response to what is happening in policing.

"The change programme is as much about addressing those issues as it is cutting budgets. We need to carry on the change programme."

Mr Sims left Oxford University in 1980 with a degree in modern history before joining the Metropolitan Police in London.

Having risen through the ranks he transferred to Staffordshire Police as a Superintendent in 1994 and was promoted to Assistant Chief Constable of West Midlands Police four years later.

In 2003 he became Deputy Chief Constable and, following a stint as Director of Policing Policy at the National Policing Improvement Agency, became Chief Constable of Staffordshire Police in 2007.

He returned to the West Midlands in June 2009 as Chief Constable.

He was awarded an OBE in 2003 and Queen's Police Medal in 2010.

He says one regret is that more has not been done to merge police forces or for them to work closer.

He says Britain's current 43 forces model is not sustainable, adding: "Having been Chief Constable in Staffordshire and then at West Midlands, I hoped we would be further down the track with the work we do with other regional forces.

"We still run the motorway policing and more serious organised crime work together, but if you asked me six or seven years ago, I would have thought there would be more convergence."

"I think policing in the wider West Midlands region would be stronger if we worked together."

Mr Sims said the proudest moment in his career came with swiftly restoring order following the 2010 riots, and the investigation into racist killer and mosque bomber Pavlo Lapshyn who struck in Walsall, West Bromwich and Wolverhampton in 2013.

Lapshyn was caught in 2013 following a painstaking inquiry that saw detectives trawl tens of thousands of hours of CCTV to piece together the Ukrainian student's movements and link him to the three bomb blasts.

Diverse

Mr Sims said "That investigation embodied all that is good about West Midlands Police: standing shoulder-to-shoulder with our diverse communities, fantastic detective work, and good old fashioned neighbourhood policing with officers knocking on doors until they came across Lapshyn's place of work."

He now plans a brief hiatus before aiming to return to policing in a senior leadership role nationally in the New Year.

He added: "I will miss the people and being at the heart of the big issues that affect people's lives in the West Midlands and hopefully influencing in a positive way.

"I intend to recharge the batteries because as Chief Constable you never really switch off; I'm looking forward to that but don't want to be away from policing for too long.

Police and Crime Commissioner David Jamieson described Mr Sims as 'an outstanding public servant' who has 'devoted his life to protecting the security and safety of the public'.

He added: "Chris Sims has served the West Midlands with distinction and given over 30 years of devoted service as an officer."

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Hospital weekend staff shortage affected care

STAFF shortages at a hospital may have contributed toward the death of a 72-year-old woman from Quarry Bank, an inquest heard.

Dorothy Moule became ill following complications with a hernia operation and died four days later from multi-organ failure in Worcester Royal Hospital.

During a two-day inquest, nurses claimed their concerns over Mrs Moule's deteriorating health had not been taken seriously.

The inquest at Stourport Coroners' Court also heard how results of a white blood cell test, which may have revealed infection, had not been urgently followed up after going missing.

Coroner Geraint Williams, reading out a narrative verdict, concluded Mrs Moule's death was a result of 'complications of an elective surgical procedure'.

He said the case showed there had been a shortage of staff during the weekend of Mrs Moule's death, adding too many junior doctors had been left to look after seriously ill patients. He also strongly criticised doctors for a lack of detailed notes in Mrs Moule's charts.

He said: "I have not been able to examine the action of the clinicians over that weekend in terms of medical records because not one has made a single entry. It's a matter of extraordinary concern to this court clinicians do not make full and proper entries in the notes. It's a matter I have raised on many occasions and all doctors should know the importance.

"No doctor attended or saw Mrs Moule over that weekend, which I find completely unacceptable and it's something the trust needs to address as a matter of urgency."

Mr Williams said staff shortages had an effect on the care given to Mrs Moule but he praised nurses for taking great concern over her welfare and informing seniors about her deteriorating condition.

He said: "It's clear because of the pressure of work a number of clinicians did not realise Mrs Moule was as ill as she was."

Dr Graham James said a number of changes, including further training, had been carried out at the hospital since Mrs Moule's death.

Dorothy Moule, who died in hospital

Road safety scheme goes ahead by school

A £75,000 scheme to cut speed limits and revise the road layout to boost safety outside a school is being introduced after a period of consultation.

Residents have been consulted about the improvements on roads around Lapal Primary School in Halesowen but some aspects have faced objections.

Speed bumps, parking restrictions and new signs will be added in a bid to improve safety after Lapal Primary was made part of Dudley Council's Safer Routes to School scheme.

Priory Road will be made into a one-way route from the junction with Carters Lane.

The move comes after residents raised concerns regarding the street being clogged by parked cars.

Crossing

Speed limits will be cut from 30mph to 20mph in Manor Lane as part of the project. A zebra crossing is being created to improve access for people walking to and from the Priory Road school.

Parking restrictions have already been introduced in Spies Lane during the initial stage of works.

Around 200 households had been consulted by the council and 27 objections were received alongside a 51-strong petition from rManor Abbey Road, which was outside the consultation area. Concerns focused on making Priory Road one-way.

Dudley Council cabinet member Councillor Hilary Bills said: "At the end of the day it is all about making it safer for children going to school."

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www.qkm.org.uk FIVE MINUTES FROM MERRY HILL

All aboard — figures show rail stations are getting busier

THE QUIETEST and busiest railway stations in the Black Country and Staffordshire have been revealed in figures from the rail regulator.

Wolverhampton was the busiest station, with almost 4.5 million entries and exits in the last year, a rise of more than two per cent on the previous year. But Sandwell and Dudley recorded the biggest increase.

The data showed Cannock was the quietest station – with 221,124 entries and exits, a fall of almost 11 per cent on 2013-2014, due to interruptions in service caused by engineering work to electrify the Chase Line.

The 'top of the stops' report, released by the Office of Rail and Road recorded 'entries and exits' based on the total number of people travelling to or from the station.

Nationally the total number of estimated entries and exits at Britain's stations between April 2014 and March 2015 reached nearly 2.8 billion, an increase of more than 119 million.

Almost all of the top 10 busiest rail stations were in London, with Waterloo at the top, but Birmingham New Street station which came eighth in the list, with more than 35.3 million entries and exits in the last year, a two per cent increase.

Walsall was the second busiest Midlands station, with 1.3 million journeys, a rise of 1.6 per cent, followed by Sandwell and Dudley with 831,756 entries and exits, up 5.4 per cent.

Dudley Port recorded 421,370 journeys in the12 months up until April, a rise of 0.6 per cent, while Coseley, with 411,584 entries and exits, saw a 1.1 per cent increase.

A Department for Transport spokesman said: "These figures are further proof that Britain's railways are booming, which is why we are investing record amounts in building a world-class railway."

Where there's a Will, CBSO find a way

THE City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra will celebrate the life of William Shakespeare at a series of concerts.

More than 20 orchestral and chamber concerts will be held in 2016 as the CBSO and its ensembles perform music spanning four centuries inspired by Shakespeare's plays.

CBSO chief executive Stephen Maddock said: "Shakespeare is in the lifeblood of the Midlands, it is where he grew up and where he is buried.

"We have the privilege of being the only symphony orchestra within the region and as such are thrilled to be celebrating his life with 'Our Shakespeare', which we believe is the world's largest scale concert series celebrating the music inspired by the playwright's work.

"We will be working with our hugely talented team and we'll also be bringing to the Midlands some of the world's most talented artists."

Town players bring cheer to children

Dillon Smith, aged 14, with footballer Lee Smith, team coach Jason Connell, and BCTG director Chris Luty

GENEROUS players, staff and sponsors at Dudley Town Football Club dished out Christmas gifts to poorly children and their families at Russells Hall Hospital.

Members of the club with sacks full of presents paid a visit to the children's ward at the Dudley hospital to put a smile on the faces of youngsters.

It is the 12th year Dudley Town has donated gifts to the ward and this Christmas more than £800 of gifts were given away.

Club chairman Stephen Austin said: "We want to say a big thank you to all the people who have supported our Christmas toy appeal so that we can go and take presents to children in hospital over Christmas.

"No one likes being ill especially at Christmas and we hope the visit cheered up the children and their families,."

The club received additional support from its sponsor company BCTG and team coach company Cushillo Personnel, which boosted the number of gifts given out.

Mr Austin said: "This year we received an additional £300 from our sponsor Chris Luty at BCTG, as well as £100 from team coach Jason Connell at Cushillo Personnel, which made a big difference to the amount of presents we were able to hand out."

Mr Luty, BCTG director, added: "BCTG staff have been carrying out random acts of kindness in the run-up to Christmas – anything from paying for shoppers' parking and giving money to foodbanks, to this – it's what Christmas should all be about."

Musicians in church concert for refugees

AN EVENING of busking and free music in Dudley to support refugees fleeing war-torn Syria raised nearly £200.

Dudley Community Church hosted the charity concert, which included a first appearance from duo Eternal Purpose. A Busker's Christmas was also supported by Dani Sedgley and raised £192.

The money has been sent directly to the Incare, a Christian charity that provides food and shelter in Jordan for the refugees from neighbouring Syria.

Eternal Purpose, including guitarist David Tatler, from Penn, and singer Tim Matthews, have released a charity single called Refugee.

Mr Tatler said: "Dani has a beautiful voice and she performed four songs with her acoustic guitar. Church singers Emma and Jo's duet was an adaption of Leonard Cohen's Hallelujah and Pastor Joe Hayes compered the evening."

Mr Tatler was diagnosed with cancer two years ago but after making a full recovery decided to help refugees. He wrote and recorded Refugee with Mr Matthews and filmed the video in Wombourne.

The song has been released on YouTube and can be bought in CD format from Vines coffee shop in Stourbridge, or downloaded through iTunes.

Buggy riding vandals attacking golf courses

POLICE launched an investigation following a spate of vandalism incidents at golf courses.

Buggies were driven around the greens and damaged as yobs wreaked havoc at four courses. The first attack happened at Swindon Golf Club in Blackhills on December 7. The following day, buggies were spray painted at Enville Golf Club. Buggies were again the target at Penn and Kingswinford on December 13 and 14.

A million-seller after 25 years of rejections

Brierley Hill author Angela Marsons is a best-selling author with fans worldwide after 25 years of rejections

IT'S been a remarkable year of success for one Black Country author who has sold her one millionth novel less than a year after first thriller was published.

Angela Marsons, of Brierley Hill, released three books in her crime series this year and has already topped the Amazon charts around the world.

Her debut novel Silent Scream has gone on to sell over 600,000 copies and was the number one Amazon bestseller in the UK for more than a month. It also reached the top 5 in the US and has secured deals in ten countries, from Germany to Lithuania.

Her follow-up novels, Evil Games and Lost Girls both hit the Amazon UK top ten.

The 47-year-old has now given up her job of 19 years as a security guard at the Merry Hill shopping centre to focus fully on writing.

Lifeline

"I had been trying numerous publishers for 25 years but constantly got rejected. It just felt like I would never get there," she said.

"It was only last September that I was approached by a commissioning editor at a digital publisher, Bookouture, and they asked would I be interested in publishing with them. It was a lifeline for me.

"To have gone on to achieve the success I have in such a short time is unbelievable. Everyday I have to pinch myself to see if its real – it is a dream come true," she added.

Angela's books all have a Black Country setting and feature the formidable, no-nonsense lead character Detective Kim Stone.

Angela's books can be purchased via Amazon and on Kindle now.

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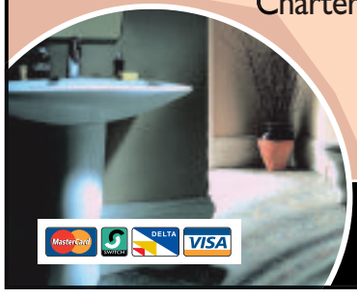

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Crash victims include brother who 'had a heart of gold'

'HE was a free-spirited, cheeky lad with a heart of gold' – the touching tribute to a father who was one of two men killed in a car crash in Brierley Hill, leaving their families heartbroken at Christmas.

Karl Green, aged 34, died after a blue Citroen ZX smashed into a wall near shops in Brierley Hill in the early hours of Christmas Eve. Andy Wheeler, 28, was also killed in the smash.

The pair died at the scene of the tragedy outside the Nail and Tanning Studio in Brettell Lane just after midnight.

Mr Green, a builder, leaves a four-year-old daughter.

His family have spoken of their devastation at his death, hours before a planned family celebration for the festive season.

His brother Adam, aged 31, said the family were struggling to come to terms with the tragedy, but said they would 'stay very strong' for the sake of his daughter Immie.

Loved

He added: "Karl was a free-spirited, cheeky lad who could put a smile on anybody's face and we were quite close. He was mischievous but loved by everyone who knew him. He really did have a heart of gold."

Tributes were paid to Mr Wheeler on Facebook.

Investigations are continuing into the circumstances. Paramedics and firefighters from Brierley Hill and Haden Cross released one of the men but he could not be saved.

Pc Karl Davies said: "We are trying to establish how this crash occurred. Two families have been devastated by the loss of their loved ones and even the smallest piece of information could help us piece together what happened."

Machete thugs attack staff in early hours

THUGS attacked a doorman with a machete and brandished a firearm outside a nightclub in Dudley during the early hours of Christmas Day.

Detectives are searching for men who attacked staff at Rock Zombie on King Street at around 1.20am after they were refused entry.

They attacked door staff, head-butting one before kicking and punching the doors and windows of the club and throwing rocks. About an hour later, at around 2.20am, three of the men returned in what is believed to be a silver three door Vauxhall Astra with alloy wheels.

One produced a firearm and chased a doorman, another produced a large machete and struck the doorman twice with it, hitting him so hard the weapon broke. Detective Constable Pete Miller said: "Luckily the doorman's body armour saved him from serious injury."

Call police on 101 or anonymously on 0800 555 111.

Doris celebrates her extra special day

Doris Sidaway celebrates her 100th birthday at Valley Court in Cradley Heath with carers Jodie Garratt and Helen Boffey

A WOMAN who has spent her whole life in Cradley Heath celebrated her milestone 100th birthday surrounded by carers and residents in her care home.

Doris Sidaway was all smiles when she was the centre of attention at Valley Court nursing home in Cradley Heath last month, where she was guest of honour at a big party to celebrate her special birthday.

Mrs Sidaway had been married at 18 to her beloved Amos, who died around 10 years ago.

Carer Jodie Garratt, 24, said: "We made a big fuss of Doris and she loved it. It's such a shame that she now suffers with dementia but she doesn't give us any trouble whatsoever.

"She quietly goes about her business and she's a pleasure to look after."

Legion breaks record after £43k is raised

MORE than £43,000 has been raised towards this year's Poppy Appeal by volunteers in Kingswinford.

The total has beaten previous records attained by the Kingswinford branch of the Royal British Legion.

The branch has bounced back following the break-in suffered by the club in 2015.

Organisers of the Kingswinford Poppy Appeal said that they would like to thank the public for their outstanding generosity as they revealed £43,407.52 has been raised so far.

Bob Townsend, Poppy Appeal Organiser, paid tribute to those who had given their time and money to the cause.

He said he was very grateful to the many individuals from the branch, women's section and club members who gave their time generously.

Thanks were also made to school pupils who continue to support the cause, businesses, churches, cadet forces, scouts, guides, cubs, brownies, beavers and rainbows.

Members of the club also wished to thank Morrison's supermarket, Co-op and the Lidl store who allowed volunteers to use their supermarket premises to sell poppies and collect money for the Poppy Appeal.

Recognition was also given to the participants in this year's annual sponsored Poppy Walk.

Visits to Santa's zoo grotto break record

MORE than 12,000 people paid a visit to Santa at Dudley Zoo over the Christmas period.

The number of visitors to Santa's grotto was up by 2,000 on last year's figure at the Castle Hill attraction.

In total, 12,591 went to the grotto during December, with children eager to tell Santa what presents they wanted delivered while also visiting the zoo's animals.

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Wizz Air flies in with new service to Poznan

WIZZ Air, the largest low-cost airline in Central and Eastern Europe, has launched its new service between Birmingham and Poznan in Poland.

This new route is being operated twice a week on Mondays and Fridays in the winter season, and on Tuesdays and Saturdays during the summer season, starting at the end of March.

William Pearson, aviation development director at the airport, said: "Wizz Air started flying from Birmingham Airport in September this year, and has already carried more than 12,000 passengers through the airport with its low-fare seats selling quickly to Eastern European destinations.

"Poznan is the third Polish city being served by the airline direct from Birmingham Airport. We're confident that this will be a very popular route with our passengers as the city is one of Poland's largest and most important business and leisure destinations."

Poznan is known for its picturesque Old Town, reconstructed after the devastation of the Second World War.

Women and children hospitals to merge as early as next summer

BIRMINGHAM'S Children's Hospital and Women's Hospital have revealed they want to merge, bringing the two together as early as next summer.

The move could mean developing a joint hospital at Edgbaston. This would mean closing the Children's Hospital site in Steelhouse Lane and moving to Edgbaston, beside the Women's and Queen Elizabeth hospitals.

Alternatively, the two say they will also look at the affordability and feasibility of developing their existing sites.

The pair say the merger announcement is the result of months of joint work 'to develop a shared vision for the best children's and women's healthcare built around the whole family'. It was accelerated when Children's Hospital chief executive Sarah-Jane Marsh was also appointed to head the Women's Hospital this summer.

The two hospitals say work will start in January on preparing an outline business case. The target date for the merger is late summer next year.

Safeguard

Birmingham Children's Hospital chairman, Dame Christine Braddock, said: "At Birmingham Children's Hospital we are very proud of our clinical excellence and the positive impact we have on the lives of so many children, young people and families.

"In our role as a leader of children's healthcare locally, regionally and nationally, the decision to formalise our plans to merge with Birmingham Women's Hospital is an important next step in our relationship that we know will improve and safeguard our vital services for many generations of families to come."

Birmingham Women's chairman Elisabeth Buggins added: "A joint future with Birmingham Children's Hospital would strengthen our position as a strategic leader in services for families and help us stay at the cutting edge of research. This will ensure that we can continue to give our women, babies, children and families access to the very best expertise, techniques and treatment the NHS can offer."

The Children's Hospital was opened in Steelhouse Lane in 1862 with 16 beds. In 1917 it moved to Ladywood but returned to its original home in 1998. It treats around 270,600 young people a year. Birmingham Women's Hospital has been at its Edgbaston site since 1994.

Zoo giraffe Mia has died

Quite a character – Dudley Zoo's Mia with her son Kito, born last year

A GIRAFFE which has been a star attraction at Dudley Zoo for the past four years has died at the age of 11 after suffering a fractured leg.

Rothschild's giraffe Mia first came to the park in 2011 and was described as a 'quite a character' by workers. She gave birth to her son Kito on February 25 last year.

Mia died last week after being found with a fractured leg that was inoperable.

Delivery firm is expanding with move to estate

A TRANSPORT and delivery firm with customers across Europe is set to expand and take on three more staff.

JJX Logistics,which has its head office in Stourbridge, is adding the finishing touches to Building 40 on The Pensnett Estate, Kingswinford.

The firm has agreed a five-year lease with owners London & Cambridge Properties.

The international courier service and general haulage company, which also runs commercial pallet storage, is in the process of moving in at its new 21,460 sq ft unit.

Operations manager Mick Cox said the new site complements its existing 10,000 sq ft base in Cooper Street, Wolverhampton, which is being retained for warehousing.

It marks the beginning of what is likely to be a rapid period of expansion for JJX Logistics, with plans for a larger vehicle fleet and new drivers to be rolled out during 2016.

"We are growing at a rapid rate of knots and I believe we could even outgrow our new facilities within three years," added Mr Cox.

PCSOs saved by force saving on police buildings

THE jobs of hundreds of PCSOs in the West Midlands have been saved after the force made 'efficiencies' to protect the community bobbies.

West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner David Jamieson has announced there will be no compulsory redundancies of Police Community Support Officers.

It is the result of 'tough decisions' about cuts across the force, such as the decision to reduce the number of buildings owned and rented by West Midlands Police.

The force was due to cut its number of PCSOs by more than 400 over the next five years. The number was due to fall from 535 to 119, as part of a plan to make a total of £130 million of savings by 2020. A petition to save PCSOs gathered 1,406 signatures.

Mr Jamieson said: "This announcement follows much hard work from myself with the chief constable and deputy chief constable. Working together we have now made changes elsewhere in the organisation so as to be able to protect the PCSOs, who the public value so highly. We are having to continue with efficiencies elsewhere, like the number of buildings we own and rent."

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Boxes of figures and memorabilia in Antony's Star Wars room

The avid collector with his partner Helen Cox and some more figurines

Antony shows off some more of his purchases, which have totalled £100,000

Antony's amazing collection which stretches back to his childhood

A model of one of the good guys, a rebel trooper, in its packaging

Force is with Antony

WITH the advent of the new Star Wars film in the cinemas, plenty of fanatics are already out in force to show their enthusiasm for the film phenomenon.

But one Brummie postman may have trumped the lot as he reveals his collection of memorabilia, which he has spent more than £100,000 on.

Antony Blunt, aged 38, has been collecting for some 20 years and has a treasure trove of Star Wars memorabilia ranging from imperial shuttles to custom-made rebel troopers. He is such an enthusiast in fact that he has a room dedicated to his favourite franchise, which is stuffed full of figurines and models from a galaxy far far away.

Despite adding to his collection every weekend and having no plans of stopping, this is the first time that Antony has shown his collection off.

He said: "I have spent over a hundred thousand on my collection, it's one of my passions.

"I have been collecting since the mid-1990s, but have had some of the toys since the 1980s, so it goes a very long way back for me. It's really been over the past 20 years though that my collection has really grown, but I have some really great pieces because of it. The most expensive piece that I have is a model A-Wing fighter, which cost me £400. Every Friday I will sit down and get on the internet auctions sites to get new collectables. I have a rule where I have to buy at least one thing every Friday."

While most people might not have the patience to put up with Antony's obsession, which has cost as much as £400 for one item, partner Helen Cox, 43, has managed to find a way to exist alongside the collection.

She said: "I do get a bit confused by the details that Antony goes to with his collecting, but I do find Star Wars quite interesting."

Antony with a model of Darth Vader's Imperial Shuttle from The Empire Strikes Back

Adult and Community Learning In Sedgley

COURSES AVAILABLE	START DATE	DAY/TIME	PRICE	NO OF WEEKS
COMPUTERS & ICT				
Photoshop - Mixed Abilities	January	Monday - 6.30pm	£60.00	10
Create Your Own Website	January	Wednesday- 7.00pm	£36.00	6
Mastering Your Ipod/Iphone - A Simple Beginners Guide	January	Monday - 4.30pm	£30.00	5
Mastering Your Android Phone/Tablet	January	Thursday - 7.00pm	£36.00	6
Ebay - All you need to know about Buying and Selling	January	Thursday 7.00pm	£24.00	4
ARTS & CRAFTS				
Flower Arranging - Beginners	January	Monday - 7.00pm	£60.00	10
Flower Arranging - Improvers	January	Wednesday - 7.00pm	£60.00	10
Flower Arranging - Workshops, Bridal /Valentines/Mothers Day	Jan/Feb/March	Saturdays	£30.00	1
Fashion Sewing/Dressmaking - Beginners	January	Tuesday - 7.00pm	£60.00	10
Fashion Sewing/Dressmaking - Improvers	January	Wednesday - 7.00pm	£60.00	10
Cake Decorating & Sugarcraft - Beginners	January	Thursday - 7.00pm	£30.00	5
Cake Decorating & Sugarcraft - Improvers	January	Tuesday - 7.00pm	£30.00	5
Jewellery Making - Mixed Abilities	January	Tuesday - 7.00pm	£60.00	10
Black Country Crafts	January	Wednesday - 7.00pm	£36.00	6
Art - Watercolours	January	Tuesday - 7.00pm	£48.00	8
Art - How to Draw and Paint - Beginners	January	Wednesday- 1.30pm	£60.00	10
Art - How to Draw and Paint - Improvers	January	Friday - 11.00am	£60.00	10
Stained Glass - Beginners	January	Thursday - 5.30pm	£60.00	10
Stained Glass - Improvers	January	Thursday -7.30pm	£60.00	10
MUSIC & DANCE				
Guitar for Beginners	January	Thursday - 6.00pm	£30.00	10
Guitar for Improvers	January	Wed/Thurs - 7.00pm	£60.00	10
Black Sheep Belly Dance	January	Friday - 7.30pm	£45.00	10
Dancing - Strictly Latin	January	Thursday - 6.30	£45.00	10
LANGUAGES				
Sign Language Level 1	January	Tuesday - 7.00pm	Contact Centre for Fees	
Spanish Level 1 -Beginners	January	Monday - 7.00pm	£60.00	10
Spanish Level 1 - Improvers	January	Tuesday - 7.00pm	£60.00	10
French for Complete Beginners	January	Thursday - 7.00pm	£60.00	10
HEALTH & FITNESS				
Nifty Keep Fit	January	Tuesday - 9.45am	£39.00	13
Zumba	January	Tuesday - 11.00am	£39.00	13
Gentle Zumba	January	Wednesday - 11.30am	£39.00	13

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Cinders loses sparkle in a big arena setting

REVIEWS

Cinderella,
Barclaycard Arena, Birmingham

IT has been dubbed as the world's biggest pantomime, yet Cinderella didn't seem to quite live up to it's sparkly expectations.

Putting the show on in an arena was always going to be a brave move, and in some ways it paid off. As we walked into the auditorium – taking our seats halfway up in the gods – my six-year-old niece gasped as she laid eyes on the 50 foot castle that dominated the stage.

The set was impressive, no doubt, yet it immediately felt like the evening had already had some of the magic drawn away as there was no iconic red curtain to reveal it for the first time.

Stitches

I was concerned that those at the back of the auditorium wouldn't feel as involved as those in the lower tiers.

Thankfully, due to the persistence of Bradley Walsh, Paul O'Grady and Dick and Dom it worked. The latter had adults and children alike in stitches as they entered on horses, followed by an audience participation sing-song. Combined with Walsh (Buttons) entering on a rope swing, getting stuck and then complaining he had a wedgie for five minutes and O'Grady's slapstick humour the show was packed with typical panto content.

Granted they got everyone involved, but it missed that enclosed theatre that increases that atmosphere. It was apparent a lot of money had been spent on putting on this production, yet when sitting at the back of the auditorium cast members looked too tiny and there were no big screens to help you embrace their true characters.

Paul O'Grady wings into action

Bradley Walsh and Hannah Grover

Lovable duo Dick and Dom had the audience in fits of laughter

Tickets cost from £27.70 to £46.06, which makes it the world's most expensive pantomime too.

But, if I'm forking out £154 for four tickets, then I would at least like to properly see the faces of the cast.

The 3-D effects didn't seem to add anything, while the addition of circus acts – although incredible – didn't seem to go hand in hand with the fairytale story, neither did the Bollywood dance scene Even a couple of proper changes of scenery would have been a breath of fresh air.

That arena holds 12,802 seats – half of which were taken away by the set – so why was the space not used to its full advantage? Unfortunately, it seemed taking out of its home and placing it in an arena just didn't seem to pack the same punch.

By Becky Weaver

A queen gradually finds her courage — Emma Cunniffe as Anne, left, and Natascha McElhone as Sarah Churchill

A forgotten queen is finally given her due

Queen Anne, Swan Theatre,
Stratford-upon-Avon

LAST monarch of the Stuart line, Queen Anne is almost a forgotten queen, never celebrated like Elizabeth I or Victoria.

But her reign came at a time when the modern age was emerging with party politics and paparazzi-style pamphlets on the streets.

Helen Edmundson's absorbing new play finally brings Queen Anne out of the shadows of history and gives her the limelight she deserves in a five-star 18th century dress production by the Royal Shakespeare Company.

Lean and swiftly-paced by director Natalie Abrahami, it also has many resonances for our times, such as the shaky union with Scotland, kiss-and-tell scandal and political intrigue.

What makes the play so compelling, is that it is the story of two women — the sickly, needy Anne, and the glamorous, ambitious Sarah Churchill, Duchess of Marlborough, whose husband John is the hero general of the age.

When we first encounter Anne she is still a princess, her stroppy Dutch brother-in-law King William apparently eager to sideline her due to her inability to produce an heir after several miscarriages and the death of her young son.

She is also under the influence of the Duchess, upon whom she clearly has a crush, or maybe it is that she sees the woman she wants to be.

But when she unexpectedly becomes queen, Anne gradually finds the courage and confidence to become a real ruler rather than a puppet for power-hungry individuals and factions.

There are not enough roles in theatre for women aged over 30 but here we have two and the actors to make the most of them. Natascha McElhone is splendidly haughty and charismatic as the beautiful, confident Duchess, who finally over-reaches herself. Emma Cunniffe as Anne, who came to the role late because of the withdrawal of another actor, is utterly convincing as Anne, sad and hesitant but with a heart of English oak.

There are many excellent supporting roles, including Beth Park as the no-nonsense Abigail Hill, who helps Anne find her confidence, and Jonathan Broadbent, as the comically tentative schemer Robert Harley, a blueprint for today's politicians.

Anyone who enjoyed the machinations and drama of Wolf Hall would surely also be impressed by Queen Anne. It continues at the Swan until January 23.

By Leon Burakowski

Express & Star

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Lucky driver escapes as truck impaled on fence

A DRIVER had a lucky escape after his truck was left impaled on a 7ft metal fence after a crash outside a scaffolding firm.

Paramedics carefully freed the man, believed to be in his 50s, following the accident outside Viking scaffolding in Shaw Road, Dudley.

They arrived at the scene to find a blue and grey Crew-Cab perched on top of the yard's fencing in at around 8.40am on December 23.

Medics said it was 'remarkable' the man was not seriously hurt. He sustained a suspected fractured collarbone, neck pain and some minor facial injuries.

West Midlands Fire and Rescue Service sent 10 firefighters, a paramedic area support officer, the West Midlands CARE team and the Midlands Air Ambulance from Cosford to the scene.

They used scaffolding from the nearby yard to build a high platform in order to cut the man free of the wreck.

No other vehicle was involved in the crash.

West Midlands Ambulance Service Jamie Arrowsmith said: "On arrival, crews discovered a male patient, believed to be in his 50s, lying across the front two seats of his vehicle. Due to the damage caused in the incident he was trapped and the fire service worked quickly to stabilise the car in order for ambulance staff to be able to fully assess the man.

"Remarkably the man, who remained conscious throughout, had escaped serious injuries but was treated for minor injuries to his face, neck pain and a suspected fractured collarbone.

Stretcher

"It took approximately an hour to free the man who was immobilised with the use of a scoop stretcher before being moved on to the ambulance and transported to Russells Hall Hospital."

Nearby Midtherm worker Dave Berrington, aged 50, said: "I heard a huge bang and rushed outside to see the car planted on top of the steel fence.

"There were a lot of firemen working to cut the top of the truck open and get the driver out. It was very chaotic.

"I just don't know how the truck could have ended up as high as that. Firemen told me the driver was the luckiest man alive."

The truck impaled on the 7ft metal fence at the scaffolding firm in Shaw Road, Dudley

Firefighters work to free the driver and the car. Credit: West Midlands Ambulance Service

Upturn in fortunes as school rated 'good' by Ofsted

A SEDGLEY school has completed a turnaround in its fortunes following its latest Ofsted report.

Two years ago inspectors rated High Arcal School as inadequate, placing the school into special measures.

However, a new inspectors' report has seen the school ranked as good across the board.

High Arcal was in special measures for more than a year after being handed the inadequate rating in December 2013.

Headteacher Jo Manson said: "I am delighted that Ofsted has recognised our inclusive ethos summed up by a student who told the inspectors 'it's OK to be different here'."

The four-strong team of inspectors concluded: "The principal and senior leaders have effectively communicated a culture of high expectations and the academy places great emphasis on ensuring that students' well-being is at the core of what they do on a daily basis."

During their inspection the Ofsted team observed 40 lessons and spoke to students, staff and governors.

In their detailed report they praised the quality of teaching, the achievement of students and the curriculum that caters for the needs of all.

The report highlighted that 'rates of progress for disabled students or students with special educational needs have continued to rise rapidly'.

The students were described as polite and courteous and behaved 'consistently well in and around the academy at all times of the day and they are clearly proud of their school'.

Brother is locked up for assault on his sister

A BROTHER was reported to the police by his own sister after he pushed her and threw a milkshake over her, and as a result he was jailed.

By Nick Humphreys

Simon Carr was locked up for a total of 18 weeks at Wolverhampton Crown Court because he had also breached a suspended sentence for theft. The court heard that the 24-year-old, from Stourbridge Road, Dudley, called his sister a 'slag' before drenching her in milkshake.

Prosecutor Balvinder Bhatti told the court that Carr had pleaded guilty to a charge of common assault at magistrates court and he already had a suspended sentence hanging pver him for a theft.

She said: "On 13 October this year, in Dudley town centre, the defendant was with his sister and their friend, Ryan Fellowes.

Pushing

They were talking and an argument ensued. He called her a 'sket' and a 'slag', before pushing her.

"After this incident, she went home, followed shortly after by him.

"She threatened to call the police on him, which caused a further argument. That was when he threw the milkshake over her.

"He is the subject of a suspended sentence for theft. here are also convictions dating back to when he was a juvenile for shoplifting and dishonesty."

The prosecutor continued: "He was convicted for possession of cannabis in 2011 and there was a further offence of battery, for which he received six weeks in a young offenders' institute due to breaching a suspended sentence for the possession of cannabis conviction.

"In 2014 he was sentenced for affray, and a community order of 12 months was imposed."

Defence barrister Simon Hanns told judge Stephen Thomas: "I can't ask much from your honour in terms of credit because the only condition on his suspended sentence was that he doesn't offend again, which he has."

Carr was ordered to serve 12 weeks in custody for the suspended sentence for theft, plus an additional six weeks for the assault upon his sister.

Delays after collision

Drivers were caught up in lengthy tailbacks after a smash in the middle of a busy crossroads on the Birmingham New Road into Wolverhampton. Police were called to the junction with Parkfields Road, just before 2.30pm on Tuesday, December 22.

Two cars were involved and the drivers were checked out at the scene but there were no serious injuries.

One the same day a motorcyclist was taken to Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Birmingham with chest and suspected pelvic injuries following a crash with a bus in Coseley. The crash happened at the junction of Tunnel Street and Ivyhouse Lane at around 10am.

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Reporter Pete feels the heat while experiencing life at McDonald's - and finds it's 'bloody hard work'

McDonald's Penn Road franchisee Abdul Sirkhot

The busy Penn Road McDonald's, Wolverhampton

Pete hands over a meal to a drive-thru customer

I'm not lovin' it

My McPerience

Report by PETER MADELEY

It's hard work. You have to be willing to push yourself, otherwise you won't last here."

Abdul Sirkhot smiles as he talks me through the qualities required of the typical McDonald's staff member.

We're sitting in the back room of the Penn Road branch that he runs as franchisee - one of 11 under his wing across the Black Country and Birmingham.

I'm about to get first hand of experience of the job as an entry level worker, taking in an abridged version of the induction during which I'll prepare and serve food and drinks.

And I'm in safe hands. There are likely to be few people with a greater in-depth knowledge of the world's biggest fast food chain than Abdul.

He started out at the Baker Street branch in London in 1982, eight years after the firm opened its first UK restaurant.

His first shift was spent scrubbing sink base boards, now 33 years later he's the boss of his own ever-expanding McEmpire.

"McDonalds is in my blood," he tells me.

"For the first 20-25 years I worked seven days a week. It suited me, but working here is not for everyone. You need to be committed.

"We can get very busy and the work is non-stop. We look for people who are happy to work hard. People come here for the service as well as the food.

"You have to have a smile on your face."

You also have to be willing to start off on minimum wage. New starters get £6.71 an hour, which Abdul sets himself in line with company policy.

But he refutes the 'McJob' label, a slang term which references the company to describe low-paying jobs with little or no chance of promotion.

"Across the company 60 per cent of the business managers started out on hourly pay," he told me.

"The company thrives on advancement. We want people who start with us to prove their worth and work their way up through the company.

"Anyone who says this is low-end work is talking through ignorance.

"We think the starting wage is decent. If you are good enough you will progress and earn more."

Keeping hold of staff has traditionally been a key issue at McDonald's. Abdul employs 1,025 workers at his restaurants, but staff turnover is between 50 and 55 per cent a year.

Recruitment boss Jazz Rooprai interviews between 45 and 50 potential starters each week and has taken on 530 workers in the last 12 months.

"We are a first job for a lot of people," Jazz said. "The turnover is high because a lot of people come and work for us before going away to university.

"Some of them come back. Ideally we want quality staff to stay with us for longer because we put a lot of work into training them for the role."

The role, as I was about to find out, involves working at speed

After familiarising myself with the menu via a computer game it was time for a quick spin on the McDonald's board game – designed to test workers' knowledge of the firm and build team spirit.

I was all set to enter the fray.

Stepping behind the counter into the McDonald's kitchen was like wandering into a whirlwind.

To the outsider it's a production line, but actually it's six separate production lines all working simultaneously.

Assemble

Burgers are cooked on a large stove and fed through to two prep lines, each featuring three staff who assemble and box them, before sliding them down to the production bin.

I quickly learned the 'bin' as it is known, is the final frontier.

The place where the Big Macs, Filets 'o' Fish and pretty much every other edible item are sent to before being served.

An early cry of "five cheese, two in the bin," led me to believe that blocks of cheddar had been thrown out with the rubbish.

In fact I was being told that five cheese burgers were required but only two ready to go out to customers.

Once there the food is distributed by the front of house staff. They call out the order – naming the items, never just the number – to be collected by customers, but not before any accompanying drinks are collected.

They are prepared on another line staffed by two people at busy times, and as a general rule must be served at the same time as the food.

On top of this you have the drive-thru – the place where 60 per cent of all orders are served.

Decked out in my uniform – designed by Wayne Hemingway no less – I started off on prep line one under the guidance of assistant manager Stacey Talbot. I'm second in line, meaning buns are slid down to me by 'the initiator', a colleague who, as it swiftly becomes apparent, works with incredible speed and precision.

Pete making a Big Mac at the Penn Road restaurant

The order flashes on a screen above her head and in a split second she's laid down two cheese burger wrappers and their accompanying buns.

My job as 'the assembler' is to add the condiments and lettuce before handing over to 'the finisher', who adds the burgers and boxes or wraps up the finished item.

My first effort saw ketchup squirt off the side of the bun. Within the blink of an eye it was swiped from in front of me and binned.

"That's a reject, we'll start again," says Stacey, a six-year McDonald's veteran who started out at the Stafford Road branch.

Effort number two sees the ketchup and mustard successfully applied, but I clumsily tear a piece of cheese in half, leading to more wastage and a further delay as I struggle to separate two pieces of the stuff that appear to be sealed together.

By this stage 'the initiator' has the buns for a Big Mac, a Festive Feast and two boxes for six chicken nuggets getting lonely on the work surface in front of her.

Pete plays a training programme with recruitment boss Jazz Rooprai

I'd been on the job less than 60 seconds and already I was flagging badly. Abdul appears and tells prep line one not to worry about the food count for next hour or so.

Unbeknown to me at the time there's fierce competition playing out between the two lines as to which one can churn out the most food over the course of an hour.

Presentable

The record for the Penn Road restaurant is 491 – that's more than eight burgers a minute.

So not only were my bungling efforts scuppering a tried and tested system, I was also wreaking havoc with the in-house bragging rights.

Eventually I managed to make a couple of presentable burgers at a half decent pace, but then 'special orders' started to appear.

A filet without any tartare sauce, a plain hamburger, two Big Macs without any pickles.

My head was spinning. For a while I had been gazing longingly at the drinks section. It looked easy. Stick a cup under a Coke tap and push a button – even I can do that.

Or not as it turned out. The sheer number of different drinks and cup sizes quickly got on top of me.

"Every meal has a drink with it," Stacey told me. "There's a lot of pressure in the drinks section because the meal can't be served to the customer if the drink isn't ready to go."

I on the other hand, was ready to go – over to the serving area where I felt confident in my ability to smile at customers and hand over their food and drinks.

But again I was completely useless, losing track of order numbers and never truly mastering how to close a Happy Meal box despite numerous attempts.

Only during a brief sojourn at the drive-thru section did I come into my own. Exhausted I made a bee-line for the seating area and tucked into a Big Mac meal – one made by a professional rather than one of my own ham-fisted attempts.

Watching the operation from afar it was clear that without my interference the whole things runs like clockwork. And it needs to with 30,000 customers coming through the doors every week.

Despite hundreds of items passing through the production bin every hour it never gets clogged up – a testament to the speed and efficiency of the operation.

"There's a real sense of achievement when the shift is over and you know you've done a good job," said Abdul, stick thin despite his admission that he eats McDonald's almost every day.

The 'good job' part certainly didn't apply to my efforts, but I'm left with the feeling that it's bloody hard work for £6.71 an hour.

An outing led to 60 years of marriage

Diamond wedding couple Barbara and Tony Hanson, of Brierley Hill, met on a trip to Stourport

LOVE is still well and truly in the air for a couple who are celebrating their diamond wedding anniversary.

Even though they both went to Lomey Town School, which used to be on Cradley Heath High Street, Tony and Barbara Hanson never properly met until after they left school. Their meeting happened in 1952, when Mr Hanson, now aged 82, went on an outing with his friends to the riverside resort town of Stourport in Worcestershire where the future Mrs Hanson, now 80, also happened to be there with friends.

Mr Hanson said: "One thing led to another and three years later we were married. You could give me all the money in China, I couldn't have done no better with Barbara — she's the love of my life."

The couple, who now live in Brierley Hill, tied the knot on December 10, 1955, and went on to have a week's honeymoon in Blackpool. Mrs Hanson worked at a raincoat making company in Netherton before going on to work at BSR in Old Hill assembling record players. Mr Hanson was a moulder for 15 years and later worked all over the country for Russell & Russell as a heating engineer.

They have four children, Sharon, 57, David, 55, Lisa, 47 and Joanne, 45 and are kept busy with their seven grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

Increase in hot liquid attacks, say police

ATTACKS involving boiling water, cigarettes and acid in the West Midlands have risen in the past four years.

Figures released by West Midlands Police under the Freedom of Information Act showed that attacks from the use of boiling liquids and corrosive substances had increased since 2012.

In 2012, 13 were recorded, compared to 23 in 2015.

West Midlands Police said acid attacks, which often leave victims horrifically scarred or disfigured, were 'unacceptable' but stressed such incidents were rare.

Force spokesman Peter Edney said: "It's reassuring to see that these numbers remain low and the figures show that there has been only one actual acid attack in the last 12 months.

Flammable

"These kinds of attacks are completely unacceptable."

There were four recorded acid attacks between 2012 and 2015. One man also had corrosive liquid thrown at them. Another woman was doused in flammable liquid and a man had bleach thrown at him.

Attacks using boiling liquids, including water and hot drinks, were also recorded. In total 83 attacks between 2012 and 2015 involved what was believed to be a corrosive substance.

Report by Simon Stone

In July, shopkeeper Mohammed Tariq had acid thrown in his face when he was behind the counter in Lifestyle Express in Tividale before being slashed in the face with a knife in an unprovoked attack.

In 2014, three men who were behind a sickening doorstep acid attack in a separate incident in Tividale which left a 20-year-old woman scarred for life were jailed for a total of 44 years.

Mastermind Mohammed Rafiq paid Steven Holmes and Shannon Heaps £50 each to carry out the acid attack on an ex-lover.

Rafiq, of Cheshire Road, Smethwick, was jailed for 18 years at Wolverhampton Crown Court. Holmes, of Queens Avenue, Smethwick, was jailed for 14 years with a four-year extended licence and Heaps, of Allan Close, was jailed for 12 years.

Top of the pots dishes from the 1930s

Museum demonstrator Ann Key and the recipe book that has been donated to the Black Country Living Museum

A RARE 1938 cookbook called 'Modern Cookery Illustrated' has been donated to the Black Country Living Museum in the hope it will educate future generations on what people ate and how they prepared meals in the past.

Demonstrators now plan to put the recipes into practice in kitchens at the museum's buildings off Tipton Road.

Helen Taylor, who works as a curator at the museum, said the cookbook would typically have been seen in a working class family home.

"You would no doubt have seen this book with a new housewife. It may have been a present from her mother to show her the ropes in her new home," she said.

"The book probably wouldn't have been in a big house as they may still have had servants, so it was would probably have gone to someone just starting out," she explained.

The book is written by Lydia Chatterton and has tips on how to prepare dishes, such as rabbit and a calf's head, and how to turn stale bread into a pudding.

Unique

Miss Taylor said: "Back then nothing went to waste, even stale bread was made into a pudding. This day and age we would probably just chuck out-of-date things in the bin.

"It's quite unique to see what was known as the modern way back then.

"State-of-the-art cookers were the introduction of gas as houses were mainly built with ranges in.

Miss Taylor explained that the book was dropped off by a lady who hoped it would be useful at the museum.

She said: "We often get people coming in and offering to donate things. However, we didn't manage to grab the name of the lady who left the book, so we're hoping that she may see this article and realise how much interest it has gained.

"The book is in really good condition. We now aim to use it in our demonstrations in the houses. We usually focus on 1890 to 1910 but it would be good to bring in a later time period and put the book into practice."

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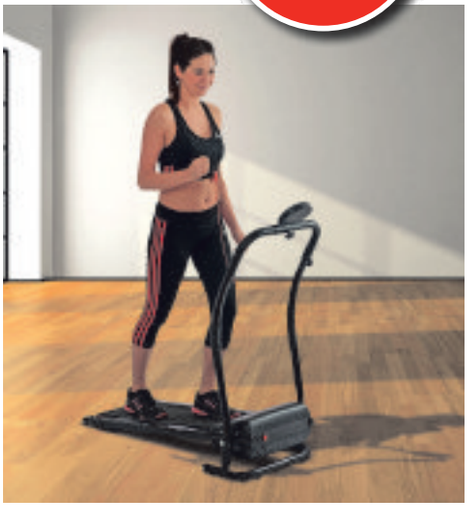

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New Year's Day

BBC 1

Julie Andrews, The Sound of Music, on at 1.15pm

6.00 Breakfast Round-up of national and international news, plus the latest from the money markets. **9.00 FILM: Turbo (2013)** Premiere. Animated adventure, with the voice of Ryan Reynolds. ★★★ **10.25 FILM: Monsters vs Aliens (2009)** Animated sci-fi comedy, with the voice of Reese Witherspoon. ★★★ **11.55 Top of the Pops New Year** With KDA, Tinie Tempah and Katy B, the Vaccines and Sigala. **12.55 The Archbishop of Canterbury's New Year Message** The Most Rev Justin Welby delivers his New Year address. **1.00 BBC News at One; Weather 1.10 Midlands Today; Weather 1.15 FILM: The Sound of Music (1965)** Rodgers and Hammerstein musical, starring Julie Andrews. ★★★★

BBC 2

The Many Faces of Ronnie Corbett, on at 8.30pm

6.35 FILM: Sinbad: Legend of the Seven Seas (2003) Animated adventure, with the voice of Brad Pitt. ★★★ **7.50 Natural World: Honey Badgers – Masters of Mayhem** (R) **8.50 FILM: Viva Las Vegas (1964)** Musical, starring Elvis Presley. ★★★ **10.15 Darcey's Ballet Heroes** Darcey Bussell considers the dancers who transformed male ballet. (R) **11.15 New Year's Day Vienna Concert 2016 12.45 FILM: Little Women (1994)** Period drama, starring Winona Ryder. ★★★ **2.40 FILM: The Eagle Has Landed (1976)** A Nazi agent plans to kidnap Churchill as the prime minister spends the weekend in a Norfolk village. Wartime adventure, starring Michael Caine. ★★★

ITV

Gino's Italian Escape - Islands in the Sun, on at 8.00pm

6.00 CITV: Dino Dan. (R) **6.10 Dino Dan** (R) **6.25 Sooty** (R) **6.40 Super 4** (R) **7.00 Mr Bean: The Animated Series** (R) **7.15 Mr Bean: The Animated Series** (R) **7.30 Mr Bean: The Animated Series** (R) **7.45 Mr Bean: The Animated Series** (R) **8.00 Oddbods** (R) **8.05 A Grizzly New Year Tale** (R) **8.35 Almost Naked Animals** (R) **8.50 Almost Naked Animals** (R) **9.10 Horrid Henry** (R) **9.25 Dickinson's Real Deal** (R) **10.30 Judge Rinder** (R) **11.30 Who's Doing the Dishes?** (R) **12.25 Celebrity Squares** With Sarah Millican, Ana Matronic, Joe Lycett and Tess Daly. (R) **1.10 ITV Lunchtime News;** Weather. **1.25 FILM: Dr No (1962)** James Bond spy thriller, starring Sean Connery. ★★★★

Ch4

Matthew Broderick stars, Inspector Gadget, on at 11.15pm

7.30 The Big Bang Theory The gang celebrates Star Wars Day. (R) **7.55 The Big Bang Theory** Penny gets fired from the movie. (R) **8.20 FILM: Planet 51 (2009)** An astronaut travels to another world where the alien inhabitants believe him to be the scout for a planned invasion. Animated sci-fi comedy, with the voice of Dwayne Johnson. ★★★ **10.10 The Simpsons** (R) **10.40 The Simpsons** Lisa accepts an invitation to join a Wiccan coven. (R) **11.15 FILM: Inspector Gadget (1999)** Disney comedy adventure, starring Matthew Broderick. ★ **12.55 Channel 4 Racing** Nick Luck presents live coverage of six races. From Cheltenham, races start at 1.20, 1.55, 2.30 and 3.05. From Musselburgh, at 1.35 and 2.10.

Ch5

Entertaining famous faces, An Audience with Ken Dodd, on at 9.00pm

6.00 Milkshake! 9.35 FILM: Thomas & Friends: Sodor's Legend of the Lost Treasure (2015) Premiere. Animated adventure, featuring the voice of Joseph May. ★★★ **10.50 FILM: Carry On Cabby (1963)** The neglected wife of a workaholic taxi owner secretly launches a rival cab firm using women drivers to tempt customers away from him. Comedy, starring Sid James. (b/w) ★★★ **12.35 FILM: Harry and the Hendersons (1987)** A family's holiday in the mountains is thrown into turmoil by an encounter with the legendary Bigfoot, whom they end up taking home. Comedy, with John Lithgow. ★★ **2.45 FILM: Dracula: Dead and Loving It (1995)** With Leslie Nielson. ★

Early View

4.05 Shaun the Sheep: The Farmer's Llamas (R)
4.30 Wreck-It Ralph (2012) Premiere. Animated adventure, with the voice of John C Reilly and Sarah Silverman. ★★★
6.05 BBC News
6.20 Midlands Today; Weather
6.30 EastEnders Mick and Linda's wedding day arrives.
7.00 Billionaire Boy Len Spud and his 12-year-old son Joe become billionaires when Len invents a new toilet roll. However, the money fails to bring them happiness. John Thomson stars.
8.00 EastEnders With Dean now outed as the black sheep of the family, he continues his revenge plot against the Carters.
8.30 Dickensian Compeyson goes to desperate lengths to make Miss Havisham notice him, and Martha Cratchit's wedding plans are thrown into turmoil by an unexpected knock at the door.
9.00 Sherlock The apparent ghost of a woman who took her own life prowls the streets of London with an unslakeable thirst for revenge, forcing Holmes to use all his cunning to defeat her.
10.30 Mrs Brown's Boys New Year Special A handsome stranger reveals he only has eyes for one special woman – Agnes Brown. The second of two festive instalments of the comedy, written by and starring Brendan O'Carroll.
11.10 BBC News; Weather.
11.25 Midlands Today; Weather; National Lottery Update
11.35 Adele at the BBC The singer-songwriter chats to Graham Norton about life and career, and is accompanied by her band on classic tracks and songs from her album 25. (R)
12.50 Weather for the Week Ahead 12.55 BBC News

4.50 Gorilla Family and Me Part two of two. Gordon Buchanan revisits the apes. (R)
5.50 The Archbishop of Canterbury's New Year Message The Most Rev Justin Welby delivers his New Year address. (R)
5.55 The Terminal (2004) Comedy, starring Tom Hanks and Catherine Zeta-Jones. ★★★
8.00 Christmas University Challenge 2015 Two teams of distinguished graduates compete on behalf of their former universities in the final of the festive edition of the quiz. Jeremy Paxman hosts. Last in the series.
8.30 The Many Faces of Ronnie Corbett Profiling the TV comedy actor who found fame at the relatively late age of 36 via the Frost Report, revealing some lesser-known details of his life and career.
9.30 The One Ronnie Comedy show from 2010 in which Ronnie Corbett celebrates his 80th birthday with a series of sketches. Featuring guest stars including David Walliams, Matt Lucas and Miranda Hart. (R)
10.20 Catch Me If You Can (2002) A conman lies his way across America, posing as a pilot, a doctor and a lawyer, while outwitting the FBI at every turn. Fact-based drama, starring Leonardo DiCaprio, Tom Hanks, Christopher Walken and Martin Sheen. ★★★
12.30 FILM: Shadow of a Doubt (1943) Alfred Hitchcock's thriller, starring Joseph Cotten. (b/w) ★★★★ **2.15 Top Gear: From A to Z** Part two of two. Alphabetical highlights from the Clarkson, May and Hammond era. (R) **3.15 Sign Zone: Hugh's War on Waste** Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall sets out to reduce the amount of food we waste. (R) **4.15 Sign Zone: The Secrets of the Mona Lisa** Exploring major new findings about Leonardo da Vinci's famous masterpiece. (R) **5.15 This Is BBC Two**

3.35 Midsomer Murders (R)
5.35 Wild River with Ray Mears
6.40 ITV Evening News; Weather.
7.00 Emmerdale Debbie visits Charity in prison, and the experience leaves her determined to leave town for good, while Chas is shocked by Gordon's account of his life since they split up.
7.30 Coronation Street Carla tells Johnny she will keep his secret if he leaves the factory and moves away, and gets more than she bargained for during a game of roulette with Robert.
8.00 Gino's Italian Escape – Islands in the Sun Gino D'Acampo ends his tour of Sicily by making cannoli, climbing the craters of Mount Etna and visiting a town that featured in the Godfather movies. Last in the series.
8.30 Coronation Street Carla swears Robert to secrecy after their moment of passion, and Roy tries to forget the incriminating letter which reveals Alan had an affair with Cathy's sister, Nessa.
9.00 The Big Quiz – Coronation Street v Emmerdale Stephen Mulhern hosts as stars from the soaps are tested on the biggest events and the funniest moments in the Yorkshire Dales and on the cobbles during 2015.
10.00 ITV News; Weather.
10.15 The Jonathan Ross Show Christmas Special The host subjects another batch of celebrity guests to no-holds-barred questioning. Plus, musical performances by (R)
11.20 American Pie: The Wedding (2003) The friends reunite to celebrate Jim and Michelle's forthcoming trip to the altar – but events quickly spiral out of control. Comedy sequel, with Jason Biggs. ★★★
1.00 Jackpot247

3.35 The Golden Compass (2007) Fantasy adventure, starring Dakota Blue Richards and Nicole Kidman. ★★★
5.50 Channel 4 News Including sport and weather.
6.00 Tangled (2010) A princess locked in a tower by a witch escapes with the aid of a bandit and tries to find her way home. Disney animation, with the voices of Mandy Moore and Zachary Levi. ★★★
8.00 Jamie and Jimmy's Friday Night Feast New series. Orlando Bloom joins hosts Jamie Oliver and Jimmy Doherty to rustle up a Moroccan tagine. Plus, Asian seafood parcels and a great British banger that can be trusted.
9.00 A Good Day to Die Hard (2013) Premiere. John McClane goes to Moscow and helps his CIA agent son stop the Russian Mob from stealing nuclear weapons. Action adventure sequel, with Bruce Willis and Jai Courtney. ★★
11.00 Rude Tube: Welcome to 2016 A real-life Alan Partridge, 50 Shades of Grey in Lego and Darth Vader on a mini Segway are among the items featured as Alex Zane marks the end of 2015 with a series compilation.
1.10 FILM: Damien: Omen II (1978) The Devil's son is now in his teens and has come to terms with his demonic fate, unleashing another series of murders. Horror sequel, with Jonathan Scott-Taylor and William Holden. ★★★ **3.00 Friday Night Dinner** Mum and Dad's anniversary goes awry. (R) **3.25 You Deserve This House** A woman who runs a swimming club for youngsters with disabilities. (R) **4.20 Location, Location, Location** Two couples who returned to the UK after travelling the world. (R) **5.15 Hugh's 3 Good Things: Best Bites** A recipe for a baked potato stuffed with curried mushrooms. (R) **5.20 Deal or No Deal** (R)

4.30 Greystoke: The Legend of Tarzan, Lord of the Apes (1984) Drama, starring Christopher Lambert. ★★★
7.00 World's Strongest Man Final 2015 Action from the Grand Final of the competition, which took place in Malaysia, as the 10 competitors who made it past the heats went head to head for the trophy. Last in the series; 5 News Update
8.00 Christmas with the Double Acts An hour of side-splitting fun with some of the greatest double acts to have graced the small screen, proving that when it comes to comedy, two are often better than one; (R) 5 News Update
9.00 An Audience with Ken Dodd Comedy and entertainment from the Liverpudlian comedian, as he celebrates his long career in showbusiness with the help of an all-star audience. (R)
10.55 Greatest Stand-Up Comedians A countdown of the 50 funniest people to have performed stand-up routines, featuring Tommy Cooper, Joan Rivers and Robin Williams. With contributions by Paul Hogan and Ross Noble. (R)
1.55 SuperCasino Viewers get the chance to take part in live interactive gaming, with a mix of roulette-wheel spins and lively chat from the presenting team. **3.10 Loch Lomond: A Year in the Wild** It is June at Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park, and cameras follow the newborns as they learn to fight, find food and avoid predators. (R) **4.00 Loch Lomond: A Year in the Wild** Cameras document autumn events at Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park, a time for the red deer rut, when stags battle for the right to breed. (R) **4.45 House Doctor** Ann Maurice helps a couple spruce up their tiny cottage in a bid to make it more attractive to prospective buyers, using small furniture to create an illusion of space. (R) **5.10 House Doctor** Advice for a couple desperate to sell their Bournemouth home. (R)

Prime Time

Late View

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CHOICE

Alexander Armstrong

Bruce's Hall of Fame with Alexander Armstrong (BBC1, 6pm)

When Bruce Forsyth fell at his home and suffered minor concussion in October, he was told to rest for a few days. Fronting this show was out of the question, so Alexander Armstrong, who was due to be a guest on the strand, has stepped in to fill the gap. Joining him in paying tribute to their inspirations are comedian and actress Catherine Tate; former Pussycat Doll Kimberley Wyatt; Australian actor, singer and dancer Adam Garcia; EastEnders actress and singer Shona McGarty; Britain's Got Talent runner-up, magician and illusionist Jamie Raven, and West-End star Beverley Knight. Paying homage to their heroes, they discover what it's like to perform as their showbiz legends would have done.

BBC1

6.00 Breakfast. **10.00** Saturday Kitchen. **11.30** James Martin: Home Comforts. **12.00** BBC News; Weather. **12.10** Football Focus. **12.50** Saturday Sportsday. **1.00** Live Darts: BDO World Championships. Coverage of the opening day of the tournament. **4.30** Final Score. **5.10** Celebrity Mastermind. **5.40** BBC News. **5.50** Regional Programme.

6.00 Bruce's Hall of Fame with Alexander Armstrong. Presenter Alexander Armstrong steps in for host Bruce Forsyth as seven famous faces are given a chance to pay homage to their idols. Comedienne Catherine Tate, former Pussycat Doll Kimberly Wyatt, actor Adam Garcia, West End actress Beverley Knight, comedienne Katherine Ryan, EastEnders star Shona McGarty and Britain's Got Talent runner-up Jamie Raven take to the stage to enjoy a moment in the limelight as their favourite stars.

7.10 Film: Iron Man 3. (2013) Premiere. The armoured avenger hunts for the mastermind behind an untraceable series of bombings, despite being cut off from his usual resources and traumatised by a recent brush with death. His search uncovers a secret conspiracy involving a drug that renders the user indestructible. Superhero adventure sequel, starring Robert Downey Jr, Gwyneth Paltrow and Don Cheadle.

9.10 Casualty. As Cal struggles to deal with his recent terrifying discovery, he discovers he is much braver than he realises. Hospital drama, starring Richard Winsor and Lee Mead.

10.00 The National Lottery Live. Gaby Roslin presents as the all-important winning numbers are revealed.

10.10 BBC News; Weather.

10.30 Match of the Day. Gary Lineker presents highlights of the latest Premier League fixtures, including West Ham United v Liverpool, Manchester United v Swansea City and Watford v Manchester City; National Lottery Update.

12.00 Film: Black Death. (2010) A naive monk joins a band of mercenaries on a mission to expose witchcraft as the bubonic plague sweeps the country. Medieval thriller, starring Sean Bean. **1.35** Weather for the Week Ahead. **1.40** BBC News.

BBC2

6.10 Race to Super Bowl 50. (R) **7.00 Film:** The Valley of Gwangi. (1969) **8.35 Film:** Merrill's Marauders. (1962) **10.10** Animal Park. (R) **11.10** Natural World. (R) **12.00** James Martin: Home Comforts. (R) **12.30** Len and Ainsley's Big Food Adventure. (R) **1.15** Sex Symbols: Talking Pictures. **1.55 Film:** Cat on a Hot Tin Roof. (1958) Drama, starring Paul Newman and Elizabeth Taylor. **3.40** Coast. (R) **4.30** Live Darts: BDO World Championships. **5.40** Growing Up Wild: Natural World. (R)

6.40 Flog It! Paul Martin looks into the history of Wellington College, Berkshire, where experts Elizabeth Talbot and Philip Serrell evaluate antiques before the auction. (R)

7.40 The Many Faces of Ronnie Corbett. Profiling the TV comedy actor who found fame at the relatively late age of 36 via the Frost Report, revealing some lesser-known details of his life and career. (R)

8.40 Dad's Army. (R)

9.10 Leningrad and the Orchestra That Defied Hitler. Amanda Vickery and Tom Service tell the story of the remarkable performance at the Philharmonic Hall in Leningrad in 1942 of Shostakovich's 7th Symphony. In the midst of a siege that would ultimately kill around 750,000 civilians, an orchestra of starving musicians was assembled to perform the composer's latest work, which itself had to be smuggled into the city after being completed while Shostakovich had been evacuated. This film explores the development of the music and features extracts from the symphony, filmed in the same location as the historic concert, and conducted by Maxim Shostakovich, the composer's son.

10.40 QI XL. An extended edition, in which question-master Stephen Fry probes the subject of Messing with Your Mind, with Sarah Millican, Tommy Tiernan, Josh Widdicombe and Alan Davies.

11.25 Darts: BDO World Championships. Action from the opening day at the Lakeside Country Club in Frimley Green, which featured first-round matches in the men's and ladies' competitions.

12.15 Darts: BDO World Championships – Extra Time. **2.15 Film:** Horror Hospital. (1973) **3.40** This Is BBC Two.

ITV

6.00 CITV: Fort Boyard Ultimate Challenge. **6.20** Pat & Stan. (R) **6.35** Dino Dan. (R) **7.00** Signed Stories: Share a Story. (R) **7.05** Oddbods. (R) **7.10** Sooty. (R) **7.20** Super 4. (R) **7.35** Mr Bean: The Animated Series. (R) **8.05** The Aquabats! Super Show! (R) **8.30** Thunderbirds Are Go. **9.00** The Tom & Jerry Show. (R) **9.15** The Tom & Jerry Show. (R) **9.25** Murder, She Wrote. (R) **10.15** The Jeremy Kyle Show. (R) **11.20** The Jeremy Kyle Show. (R) **12.20** ITV News; Weather. **12.30** The Jeremy Kyle Show. (R) **1.30** Catchphrase. (R) **2.15** Off Their Rockers. (R) **2.45 Film:** From Russia with Love. (1963) James Bond thriller, starring Sean Connery. **5.00** Panda Babies. (R)

6.00 Regional Programme; Weather.

6.15 ITV News; Weather.

6.30 New You've Been Framed. New series. Harry Hill narrates a comical selection of mishaps filmed by viewers.

7.00 Ninja Warrior UK. New series. Competitors from across the nation test their strength, speed and courage in this obstacle-course challenge, hosted by Ben Shephard, Rochelle Humes and Chris Kamara. Those who make it to the end of the adrenaline-fuelled mission face one final task – scaling the heights of a tower named Mount Midoriyama – as the battle it out for the title of Ninja Warrior UK.

8.00 Take Me Out. New series. A cosmetics consultant, a video marketing whiz, a children's football coach and an account manager set out to impress a line-up of single women.

9.00 Film: The Dark Knight. (2008) In the sequel to Batman Begins, the masked hero finds a new ally in his war on organised crime in Gotham's crusading new district attorney, Harvey Dent. However, both men are pushed to their limits by the rise of the Joker, a criminal mastermind spreading chaos and destruction throughout the city for his own amusement. Comic-book thriller, starring Christian Bale, Aaron Eckhart and an Oscar-winning Heath Ledger. Continues after the news.

10.05 ITV News; Weather.

10.25 Film: The Dark Knight. (2008) Concluded.

12.15 Jackpot247. **3.00** Murder, She Wrote. (R) **3.50** ITV Nightscreen.

CHANNEL 4

6.10 How I Met Your Mother. (R) **6.30 Film:** The War of the Worlds. (1953) Sci-fi drama, starring Gene Barry. **8.00** The Morning Line. **9.00 Film:** True Grit. (1969) Western, starring John Wayne. **11.40 Film:** Thunderbirds. (2004) Sci-fi adventure, starring Bill Paxton. **1.30** Channel 4 Racing. Live coverage from Sandown Park, Ayr and Chelmsford City. **4.00** Channel 4 News. **4.20** The Simpsons. (R) **4.50 Film:** Mission: Impossible. (1996) Action thriller, starring Tom Cruise.

6.50 Film: Mission: Impossible 2. (2000) Secret agent Ethan Hunt is sent to find and destroy the only sample of a deadly man-made virus. However, he faces tough opposition in a former spy-turned-criminal mastermind who has already acquired the cure and now wants the pathogen itself. Director John Woo's action thriller sequel, starring Tom Cruise, Dougray Scott, Thandie Newton and Anthony Hopkins.

9.00 The World's Greatest Spy Movies. A countdown of the 10 most thrilling espionage films of all time, chosen by real spies and spy-masters from MI6, the CIA and the KGB. The programme untangles fact from fiction, from Le Carre-style gritty realism to the outlandish espionage fantasies of Jason Bourne, and British superhero James Bond, revealing which film comes closest to the truth, and which has won the number one spot.

10.35 Film: Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy. (2011) A former intelligence operative is brought out of retirement to uncover a Soviet mole in a high-ranking position in MI6. Cold War thriller, starring Gary Oldman and Colin Firth.

1.00 Film: Marley. (2012) Documentary about Bob Marley, examining his life and his enduring political and musical impact. **3.30** TFI New Year's Eve. Chris Evans prepares to welcome in the new year with a mix of chat, raucous stunts and music, with Olly Murs, Quentin Tarantino, Sia and New Order, the Vaccines and Izzy Bizu. (R) **5.00** Phil Spencer: Secret Agent. The property expert offers advice to a woman in Waterloville, Hampshire, who has been trying to sell her three-bed terrace for six months without any luck. (R) **5.50** How I Met Your Mother. Marshall becomes terrified of his boss after seeing him yell at a colleague and begins to question whether he can justify staying in his job. (R)

CHANNEL 5

6.00 Milkshake! **8.55** Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. (R) **9.30** The Saturday Show. **11.30** Loch Lomond: A Year in the Wild. (R) **12.30** Loch Lomond: A Year in the Wild. (R) **1.25 Film:** Columbo Goes to the Guillotine. (1989) Detective drama, starring Peter Falk. **3.20 Film:** Columbo: Candidate for Crime. (1973) Detective drama, starring Peter Falk. **5.15** The Hunt for Hitler's Missing Millions. (R)

6.10 World War II in Colour. The story of the global conflict told using colourised archive footage, beginning with an examination of its origins. Narrated by actor Robert Powell. (R)

7.00 Ben Fogle: New Lives in the Winter Wonderland. The adventurer travels to Alaska to visit Bretwood Higman and Erin McCittrick, who hiked 4,000 miles to get to their new home, where they are now bringing up their two children. They spend half the year in a self-built Mongolian-style yurt on the mountainside, with the other six months dedicated to hiking in the region's wildernesses. (R)

8.00 Building the Ice Hotel. The work of builders constructing Icehotel, a sophisticated structure built every year since 1990 in the village of Jukkasjarvi – more than 120 miles inside the Arctic Circle. (R)

8.55 5 News Weekend.

9.00 Football League Tonight. Kelly Cates and George Riley present extended highlights of the weekend's top matches, including Middlesbrough v Derby County at the Riverside Stadium in the Championship and Sheffield United v Peterborough United at Bramall Lane in League One. Boro and the Rams are both considered as strong contenders to gain automatic promotion back to the Premier League, so a win over one of their rivals would be seen as a morale boost for both. Plus, all the goals from League Two, were matches included Portsmouth v Crawley Town at Fratton Park.

10.30 20 Moments That Rocked Talent Shows. A journey through the instances that rocked the genre and the fall-out that followed. (R)

11.55 Access. Showbiz news and gossip.

12.00 SuperCasino. **3.10** Loch Lomond: A Year in the Wild. (R) **4.00** World's Strongest Man 2015. (R) **4.50** Make It Big. (R) **5.40** Angels of Jarm. (R)

DIGITAL

BBC Three

7.00 Great TV Mistakes **7.10** Top Gear **8.00** Don't Tell the Bride **9.10** Sherlock **10.45** Family Guy **1.20** Together **3.50** Great TV Mistakes **4.00** Close

BBC Four

7.00 Stories from the Dark Earth: Meet the Ancestors Revisited **8.00** Castles – Britain's Fortified History **9.00** The Young Montalbano **10.50** The Kate Bush Story: Running Up That Hill **11.50** Kate Bush at the BBC **12.50** An Evening with Glen Campbell **2.10** Country at the BBC **3.40** Close

ITV2

11.50 The Big Quiz – Coronation Street v Emmerdale **12.50** Catchphrase **1.30 Film:** The Little Vampire (2000) **3.30 Film:** Horrid Henry: The Movie (2011) **5.25 Film:** Liar Liar (1997) **7.05 Film:** Evan Almighty (2007) **9.00** Take Me Out – The Gossip **10.00 Film:** Bridget Jones's Diary (2001) **12.00 Film:** American Pie (1999) **1.50** Totally Bonkers Guinness World Records **2.40** Teleshopping **5.40** ITV2 Nightscreen

ITV3

11.25 Film: Emma (1996) **1.55** Foyle's War **3.55 Film:** Columbo: Agenda for Murder (1990) **5.55** Midsomer Murders **8.00** Foyle's War **10.00** Lewis **12.00** Marchlands **1.05** The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes **2.05** ITV3 Nightscreen **2.30** Teleshopping

ITV4

11.50 Storage Wars **12.45 Film:** Spartacus (1960) **4.30 Film:** Superman (1978) **7.35 Film:** Space Cowboys (2000) **10.00 Film:** Magnum Force (1973) **12.35 Film:** Inside Man (2006) **3.00** Teleshopping

E4

11.00 Made in Chelsea: New Year **12.00** Couples Come Dine with Me **2.00** Rude(ish) Tube **3.00 Film:** Toy Story OF TERROR! (2013) **3.25** Toy Story Toons **4.00** Ice Age: A Mammoth Christmas **4.25 Film:** Casper (1995) **6.30** The Big Bang Theory **9.00 Film:** The Twilight Saga: Breaking Dawn – Part 2 (2012) **11.15** Gogglebox **12.55** The Inbetweeners **1.55** The IT Crowd **2.55** Gogglebox **3.35** Hollyoaks

Film4

11.00 Rio (2011) **1.00** Stuart Little (1999) **2.45** The Muppet Christmas Carol (1992) **4.35** Bandslam (2009) **6.45** The Family Stone (2005) **9.00** Rise of the Planet of the Apes (2011) Sci-fi thriller, starring James Franco. **11.05** Scary Movie (2000) **12.45** Scary Movie 2 (2001) **2.20** Silent House (2011) **4.00** Close

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CHOICE

Gillian Anderson

War & Peace (BBC1, 9pm)

Writer Andrew Davies, the man who turned Pride and Prejudice's Mr Darcy into a sex symbol, is now hoping he can transform Leo Tolstoy's tome into a small-screen classic. The latest adaptation opens in 1805, and as Russia declares war on Napoleon Bonaparte's French army, the lives of Pierre Bezukhov (Paul Dano), Andrei Bolkonsky (James Norton) and Natasha Rostova (Lily James) are about to change forever. Pierre is the illegitimate son of a wealthy count on the verge of death, his best friend Andrei is equally unhappy and eager for the challenge of war, and in Moscow, spirited teenager Natasha is desperate to experience life and love. The supporting cast includes Gillian Anderson and Jim Broadbent.

BBC1

6.00 Breakfast. **8.00** Match of the Day. (R) **9.30** Wanted Down Under. (R) **10.15** Homes Under the Hammer. (R) **11.15** Money for Nothing. (R) **12.00** Bargain Hunt. (R) **1.00** BBC News; Weather. **1.15** Britain's Muslim Soldiers. **1.55** Eat Well for Less? (R) **2.55** Escape to the Country. (R) **3.25** Billionaire Boy. (R) **4.25** Songs of Praise. **5.00** Great Barrier Reef with David Attenborough. (R)

6.00 BBC News.

6.20 Regional Programme.

6.30 Countryfile Compilation: Winter Wildlife. Ellie Harrison reports from the Cotswold Water Park, where she helps with winter maintenance and finds out about a plan to study birds' underwater habits using plastic ducks. Matt Baker reports on Irish hares, Julia Bradbury goes in search of seals in Norfolk, Richard Taylor-Jones captures animals on camera, and Adam Henson helps bring Exmoor ponies down from the moors. Plus, a look back at the most memorable moments from the series featuring winter wildlife. Including Weather For The Week Ahead.

7.30 Still Open All Hours. Granville discovers a gap in the shop's security, and finds his efforts to matchmake Gastric and Madge threatened by a neighbour's home cooking. A cherry picker causes anxiety.

8.00 Antiques Roadshow. Fiona Bruce presents the show from Bowood House in Wiltshire, where the items brought in to be valued include an account of the sinking of the Titanic by an officer who survived.

9.00 War & Peace. New series. Andrew Davies' adaptation of Tolstoy's epic story of five aristocratic families experiencing Napoleon's invasion of Russia in 1805.

10.00 BBC News.

10.20 Regional Programme.

10.30 Match of the Day 2. Mark Chapman reviews the day's two Premier League matches, which were Crystal Palace v Chelsea at Selhurst Park and Everton v Tottenham Hotspur at Goodison Park.

11.35 Film: The Road. (2009) Drama, starring Viggo Mortensen, Kodi Smit-McPhee and Charlize Theron.

1.15 Weather for the Week Ahead. **1.20** BBC News.

BBC2

6.30 The A to Z of TV Gardening. (R) **7.15** Monty Don's Italian Gardens. (R) **8.15** Countryfile Compilation: The Farming Year. (R) **9.15** Saturday Kitchen Best Bites. **10.45** Len and Ainsley's Big Food Adventure. (R) **11.30** Len and Ainsley's Big Food Adventure. (R) **12.15** MOTD2 Extra. **1.00** Live Darts: BDO World Championships. Coverage of the second day of the tournament. **5.00** Flog It! (R)

6.00 The Great History Quiz: The Tudors. Kirsty Young asks the questions in this quiz which sees two teams of historians, captained by Lucy Worsley and Dan Snow, answer questions on all aspects of Tudor life. The contestants are writer and broadcaster Anna Whitelock, Horrible Histories consultant Greg Jenner, author Kate Williams and architectural historian Jonathan Foyle. (R)

7.00 The Millionaires Gift Guide. Documentary examining the world of event planners and suppliers of luxury goods, who cater to a wealthy clientele, including a children's Christmas party at a stately home.

8.00 Dragons' Den. A former contestant makes a second attempt to impress the panel, and a former figure skater fails to inspire much confidence in Peter Jones.

9.00 My Mediterranean with Adrian Chiles. Part one of two. The journalist experiences religious festivals in the region, learning about the similarities and differences between the three main religions that co-exist there.

10.00 Charlie Brooker's 2015 Wipe. The broadcaster takes a satirical look back at the events of the past 12 months, including the beginning of Corbyn-mania and a Tory majority, and the end of Page Three. (R)

11.00 Abz on the Christmas Farm. Abz Love and his girlfriend Vicky Fallon spend Christmas reflecting on the successes and failures of their year running a smallholder farm in Wales. (R)

11.30 Darts: BDO World Championships. Action from the second day at the Lakeside Country Club in Frimley Green.

12.20 Darts: BDO World Championships – Extra Time. **2.20** Sign Zone: Countryfile Compilation: The Farming Year. (R) **3.15** Holby City. (R) **4.15** This Is BBC Two.

ITV

6.00 CITV: Fort Boyard Ultimate Challenge. **6.20** Pat & Stan. (R) **6.30** Pat & Stan. (R) **6.35** Dino Dan: Trek's Adventures. (R) **6.50** Dino Dan: Trek's Adventures. (R) **7.00** Signed Stories: Share a Story. (R) **7.05** Oddbods. (R) **7.10** Sooty. (R) **7.20** Super 4. (R) **7.35** Mr Bean: The Animated Series. (R) **7.50** Mr Bean: The Animated Series. (R) **8.05** The Aquabats! Super Show! (R) **8.30** A Grizzly New Year's Tale: The Crystal Eye. (R) **9.00** The Tom & Jerry Show. (R) **9.15** The Tom & Jerry Show. (R) **9.25** ITV News. **9.30** Murder, She Wrote. (R) **10.25** The Jeremy Kyle Show. (R) **11.25** The Jeremy Kyle Show. (R) **12.30** ITV News; Weather. **12.40** The Jeremy Kyle Show. (R) **1.40** Catchphrase. (R) **2.25** Ninja Warrior UK. (R) **3.25 Film:** Goldfinger. (1964) James Bond adventure, starring Sean Connery. **5.35** Regional Programme ; Weather.**5.45** ITV News; Weather.

6.00 Ninja Warrior UK. Competitors from across the UK test their strength, speed and courage in this obstacle-course challenge, hosted by Ben Shephard, Rochelle Humes and Chris Kamara.

7.00 Beowulf: Return to the Shieldlands. New series. The warrior returns to his homeland after 20 years to pay his respects to the town's ailing leader, and sets out to hunt down a mysterious creature terrorising the land.

8.00 Endeavour. New series. The young detective is suspended from duty following a recent case. However, he is roused from his bitterness and self-pity when the body of a woman who went missing at a funfair on Cowley Green is found near his home. He resolves to conduct a secret investigation of his own, which leads him to the city's social elite and a disturbing secret hidden in plain sight. Shaun Evans stars as the young Inspector Morse in the third series of the detective drama.

10.00 ITV News; Weather.

10.20 Joanna Lumley's Trans-Siberian Adventure. The actress travels the length of the Trans-Siberian Railway, taking in Hong Kong, Beijing, the Great Wall and the Gobi desert in the first leg of her trek. (R)

11.20 Premiership Rugby Union. Action from the eighth round of fixtures.

12.15 Jackpot247. **3.00** The Jeremy Kyle Show USA. (R) **3.40** ITV Nightscreen. **5.05** The Jeremy Kyle Show. (R)

CHANNEL 4

6.15 Film: The Parent Trap. (1961) **8.30** Frasier. (R) **9.00** Frasier. (R) **9.30** Sunday Brunch. **12.30** The Simpsons. (R) **12.55** The Simpsons. (R) **1.25** The Simpsons. (R) **1.55 Film:** Jungle 2 Jungle. (1997) Comedy, starring Tim Allen. **3.55 Film:** A Monster in Paris. (2011) **5.40** Channel 4 News.

6.00 Film: Fantastic Four. (2005) A scientist and four members of his crew develop superhuman powers after exposure to cosmic radiation on a mission to study an energy storm in space. Unfortunately, one of them chooses to use his new-found abilities for evil purposes, compelling the others to join forces to stop him. Sci-fi comic-book adventure, starring Ioan Gruffudd, Jessica Alba, Chris Evans and Michael Chiklis.

8.00 Walking the Himalayas. Levison Wood and his guide Malang Darya travels through Pakistan-controlled Kashmir and the Gilgit Valley, and aims to get as close to the heavily militarised border with India as he can, a dangerous journey that involves crossing a raging river and being met with suspicion by the local authorities. They meet a Nomadic tribe that has driven herds across the Himalayas for centuries and visits a valley which has been closed to foreigners for nearly 70 years.

9.00 Deutschland 83. New series. German Cold War spy drama. A young soldier serving in the East German military in 1983 is recruited to become a secret agent. He is given a new identity and sent over the Berlin Wall, where he must infiltrate the West German army and uncover details of American military plans in Europe. In German.

10.00 Gogglebox 2015. Highlights of the past year on Gogglebox, revisiting comments from armchair critics including Leon and June, Steph and Dom, Christopher and Stephen, and Sandy and Sandra. (R)

11.30 The Rich Kids of Instagram: Cutting Edge. Documentary examining the lives of affluent young people who use photo and video-sharing service Instagram to flaunt their luxurious lifestyles online. (R)

12.30 How the Rich Live Longer. (R) **1.25** Hollyoaks. (R) **3.35** Come Dine with Me. (R) **5.55** How I Met Your Mother. (R)

CHANNEL 5

6.00 Milkshake!: Peppa Pig. **6.05** Bananas in Pyjamas. (R) **6.20** Bob the Builder. (R) **6.30** Tickety Toc. (R) **6.40** Zack and Quack. (R) **6.55** Roobarb and Custard Too. (R) **7.00** Make Way for Noddy. (R) **7.15** Milkshake! Monkey. (R) **7.20** Paw Patrol. (R) **7.40** Little Princess. (R) **7.55** Pip Ahoy! (R) **8.10** Blaze and the Monster Machines. (R) **8.40** Ben and Holly's Little Kingdom. (R) **8.55** Wanda and the Alien. (R) **9.10** Toby's Travelling Circus. (R) **9.20** Jelly Jamm. (R) **9.30** LazyTown. (R) **9.55** Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. (R) **10.30** Football League Tonight. (R) **12.00** Funniest Falls, Falls & Flops. (R) **12.30** Loch Lomond: A Year in the Wild. (R) **1.30** Loch Lomond: A Year in the Wild. (R) **2.30 Film:** The Water Horse: Legend of the Deep. (2007) Children's fantasy adventure, starring Alex Etel. **4.35** 5 News Weekend. **4.45 Film:** Snow White. (2001) Fairy-tale fantasy, starring Kristin Kreuk.

6.25 Film: Cinderella. (1950) An orphan is forced to live a life of servitude by her cruel stepmother. The king of the realm she lives in organises a lavish ball to find a bride for his son, and a caring fairy godmother puts her magic to the task of turning the downtrodden girl into a princess. Disney animated fairytale, with the voices of Ilene Woods, William Phipps and Verna Felton.

8.00 Film: Legally Blonde. (2001) A seemingly dizzy teenager is heartbroken when her boyfriend dumps her because he thinks she is not intelligent enough to help his political career. To prove him wrong she enrols at Harvard, but finds herself out of her depth as other students do their best to humiliate her. Comedy, starring Reese Witherspoon, Luke Wilson, Selma Blair, Matthew Davis and Victor Garber.

10.00 Most Shocking Celebrity Moments 2015. Countdown of the biggest showbusiness stories and scandals of the year, including Bruce Jenner's transition to Caitlyn and the Top Gear bust-up involving Jeremy Clarkson. (R)

12.40 SuperCasino. Viewers get the chance to take part in live interactive gaming, with a mix of roulette-wheel spins and lively chat from the presenting team. **3.10** World's Strongest Man 2015. Action from the second heat of the competition from Malaysia. (R) **4.00** House Doctor. A cluttered B&B on the Norfolk coast. (R) **4.25** Make It Big. (R) **5.45** Angels of Jarm. (R)

DIGITAL

BBC Three

7.00 Top Gear **8.00** Don't Tell the Bride **9.00 Film:** Shrek the Third (2007) **10.25** Russell Howard's Good News **10.55** Family Guy **11.40** American Dad! **12.25** Russell Howard's Good News **1.25** Footballers, Sex, Money: What's Gone Wrong? **2.25** Great TV Mistakes **2.35 Film:** Hamlet 2 (2008) **4.00** Close

BBC Four

7.00 Treasures of Heaven **8.00** Westminster Abbey **9.00 Film:** Citizen Kane (1941) **11.00** Orson Welles: Talking Pictures **11.45** The Richest Songs in the World **1.15** Michael Palin's Quest for Artemisia **2.15** Westminster Abbey **3.15** Britain on Film: Kids Today **3.45** Close

ITV2

12.25 Take Me Out **1.30** Take Me Out – The Gossip **2.30 Film:** Evan Almighty (2007) **4.35 Film:** Jurassic Park (1993) **7.00 Film:** Nanny McPhee (2005) **9.00 Film:** The Shawshank Redemption (1994) **11.55 Film:** The Faculty (1998) **1.55** Totally Bonkers Guinness World Records **2.20** Rizzle Kicks: The Hot Desk **2.30** Teleshopping

ITV3

11.40 Film: Columbo: Agenda for Murder (1990) **1.45** The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes **3.55** Foyle's War **6.00** Midsomer Murders **8.00** The Cruise Ship **9.00** The Royal Variety Performance 2015 **11.50** Lewis **1.40 Film:** 10 Little Indians (1974) **3.20** Where the Heart Is **4.40** Heartbeat **5.30** On the Buses **5.55** ITV3 Nightscreen

ITV4

12.00 Film: Destry (1954) **2.05 Film:** Cheyenne Autumn (1964) **5.10 Film:** Rio Bravo (1959) **8.00** Premiership Rugby Union **9.00 Film:** The Krays (1990) **11.35 Film:** Public Enemies (2009) **2.15** Ax Men **3.00** Teleshopping

E4

12.30 Film: Space Chimps (2008) **2.05 Film:** Space Chimps 2: Zartog Strikes Back (2010) **3.45** Toy Story Toons **4.10** Ice Age: A Mammoth Christmas **4.40** Rude(ish) Tube **5.00** The Big Bang Theory **8.00 Film:** Johnny English Reborn (2011) **10.00** Tattoo Fixers **11.05** The Inbetweeners **12.15** The IT Crowd **1.20** Gogglebox **2.10** How I Met Your Mother **3.00** Rules of Engagement **3.40** The Cleveland Show **4.25** Revenge

Film4

11.00 ParaNorman (2012) **1.00** Stuart Little 2 (2002) **2.30** Tooth Fairy (2010) **4.35** Inkheart (2008) **6.40** Cutthroat Island (1995) **9.00** Faster (2010) **10.55** GI Joe: The Rise of Cobra (2009) **1.10** Choke (2008) **3.05** Close

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FILM CHOICES

MONDAY
Archipelago, BBC1, 12.05am
A man prepares to leave home to do voluntary work in Africa. His mother plans to see him off with a family get-together at their holiday home in the Isles of Scilly, but the gathering only exposes the deep-seated conflicts between them. Drama, starring Tom Hiddleston, Kate Fahy and Lydia Leonard. (2010)

TUESDAY
A Wife's Nightmare, Channel 5, 3.15pm
Premiere. A woman's life is turned upside down by the arrival of a teenage girl claiming to be her husband's long-lost daughter. Drama based on a true story, with Jennifer Beals. Edited for sex. (2014)

WEDNESDAY
Notorious, Channel 4, 12.35am
Biopic of Notorious B.I.G., whose rise to fame took him from being a Brooklyn street hustler and crack dealer to become a respected and influential rap artist, before he was brutally murdered at the age of 24. Starring Jamal Woolard, Derek Luke, Dennis LA White and Angela Bassett. (2009)

Notorious, Wednesday, Channel 4, 12.35am

THURSDAY
Expecting Amish, Channel 5, 3.15pm
Premiere. An Amish teenager returning home from a year away realises she is pregnant, and faces being ostracised from her family. Drama, starring AJ Michalka and Alyson Stoner. (2014)

FRIDAY
Amy, Channel 4, 9pm
Premiere. Documentary portrait of soul, jazz and R'n'B singer-songwriter Amy Winehouse, whose untimely death in July 2011 followed a well-publicised history of drugs and alcohol abuse. Director Asif Kapadia traces Amy's rise and demise over the 13 years preceding her death, telling her story via her music and autobiographical song lyrics, video footage shot by friends and family, archive television clips, plus voiceover interviews with those who were personally and professionally close to her. Contributors include Pete Doherty, Mitch Winehouse, Tony Bennett, Mark Ronson and Tyler James. (2015)

PICK OF THE WEEK

Wagons roll in the Wild West of Yorkshire

What's this? A rootin' tootin' Western from ITV? Well, not exactly. Although some of the pictures released by the broadcaster to promote the show look as is they're set in America's wild west, the truth couldn't be further from that.

Jessica Raine heads the cast of this eight-part drama which is set in North Yorkshire during the 1870s and focuses on the building of a railway viaduct.

Doesn't sound that exciting does it? In fact, you're probably wishing it was a Western after all. However, the series has been created and written by Steve Thompson, who numbers Sherlock and Doctor Who on his CV, while other key figures in its production have worked on such acclaimed shows as Vera, Cilla, Marchlands, Mrs Biggs and The Widower.

Jericho is the name of the shanty town created by the misfits, pioneers, settlers and outcasts who arrive in the area to work on the construction.

"Jericho was a real place," claims Thompson. "It was a little shanty town in the shadow of the Ribblehead Viaduct in North Yorkshire. Shanty towns tended to be named after famous battles or biblical places. Jericho was the one at Ribblehead so we chose it for the name of the series.

"These shanty towns started to appear when they were building the railways across Yorkshire in the 1870s. These places were like wild west towns. So the idea of making a British Western was new and exciting to me."

And that also goes some way to explaining those puzzling publicity photographs…

Raine plays Annie Quaintain, a penniless widower who, along with her teenage children, sets up a boarding house populated by labourers.

"Annie learns about this navvy town 15 miles away so they get on a train and go out there," explains the writer. "And it is just like being on a wagon train to the wild west. It's people going out to the frontier because the frontier is free.

"That's how America was created and it was the same with this culture in Yorkshire at the time. The frontier was the only free place where you could actually go and start a new life."

It's clear that Thompson admires Annie's spark, and he claims she was based on someone he once knew.

"She had three young kids and then her husband left her," he reveals. "She's one of those people who thought, 'Right, I'm going to build a new life for myself and my kids.' She was determined to stand on her own and never be reliant on anyone ever again. She learned how to do plastering and wiring and she fitted her own kitchen.

"She was never going to rely on a tradesman. Annie Quaintain is like that. For her, the great motivation in her life is her children. My mother was the same. She was a fanatical mum and a Yorkshirewoman as well. Whatever her kids wanted she was going to get it for them. So this poor woman is in a navvy town with no money and she's decided she's going to build a business empire."

And over the next eight weeks, we're going to watch her do it.

Jessica Raine stars in Jericho, Thursday, ITV, 9pm

BEST OF THE REST

MONDAY
Griff's Great Britain
ITV, 8pm
New series. Griff Rhys Jones sets out to explore eight very disparate kinds of quintessentially British terrain, investigating how they have dictated different ways of living, working and playing – both in the past and as they are now – across the entire country, while also unearthing quirky and funny facts en route. He begins by heading to the South Downs, which are situated in Hampshire and East and West Sussex, taking to the air for a bird's eye view and attempting to get to know one of the region's woolliest inhabitants.

When Ant and Dec Met the Prince: 40 Years of the Prince's Trust
ITV, 9pm
Anthony McPartlin and Declan Donnelly are granted an insight into the work of the Prince's Trust as they accompany Prince Charles on a number of engagements, as well as meeting people who have benefited directly from the charity. The duo hear anecdotes from his days in the Royal Navy and his life as a grandfather, and also speak to those closest to the prince, including the Duchess of Cornwall and his sons William and Harry. Plus, Ant and Dec pay an emotional visit to the set of Byker Grove.

TUESDAY
Big Fat Quiz of Everything
Channel 4, 9pm
Not content with asking question about what happened in a given year, Jimmy Carr is now testing famous faces' knowledge of art, literature, television, music, geography, politics, science and celebrity from the last 100,000 years of human history. Jonathan Ross, Chelsea Peretti, Jack Whitehall, Mel Giedroyc, Richard Ayoade and Noel Fielding try to carry off the title by proving they know how witch hunters determined if someone was a witch, and which 1970s board game was accused of selling sex in a box.

Celebrity Big Brother: Live Launch
Channel 5, 9pm
New series. The fly-on-the-wall fun begins once more as Emma Willis invites a fresh group of famous faces to move in together and have their every word and move recorded for the enjoyment of the viewing public. They will be entering a house transformed into a striking theatrical setting that reflects the vaudeville theatres.

Griff's Great Britain, Monday, ITV, 8pm

WEDNESDAY
Midsomer Murders
ITV, 8pm
When wealthy landowner Gregory Lancaster's body goes missing on the night of his death, a sinister web of secrets and lies is exposed in the village of Little Malton. As DCI Barnaby, DS Nelson and new Forensic Pathologist Kam Karimore investigate the mysterious crime, they find themselves drawn into a macabre world of body-snatching. Detective drama, starring Neil Dudgeon, Gwilym Lee, Manjinder Virk and Helen Baxendale.

THURSDAY
Death in Paradise
BBC1, 9pm
We're in the cold, dreary post-Christmas slump, so what better time for this detective drama to return and inject a little sunshine into our lives – even if the tropical locations do come with a side order of murder? The run begins with DI Humphrey Goodman (Kris Marshall) and the team being called in to investigate when millionaire environmentalist and scientist Dan Hagen (Julian Ovenden, fresh from ITV's recent live version of The Sound of Music) is shot on his boat while out at sea.

FRIDAY
Mr Selfridge
ITV, 9pm
The lavish period drama returns for a fourth and final run, set nine years after the last series. It finds Harry Selfridge at the apex of his power, a retail giant in the roaring twenties. Rumours of his latest romantic dalliances are the talk of the social circuit at Victor Colleano's decadent new nightspot. At home, Rosalie's daughter, Tatiana is the apple of Harry's eye, his mother Lois is as stoic as ever, and the vivacious Violette now lives in Paris.

Royal Wives at War
BBC2, 9pm
A revealing look at the abdication crisis of 1936, through the eyes of the two women at its very heart. In a number of dramatised monologues set in 1967, Elizabeth the Queen Mother (Emma Davies) and Wallis Simpson (Gina McKee) look back at the dramatic events that led to King Edward VIII giving up the throne for the woman he loved.

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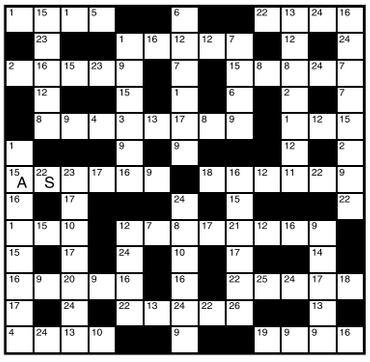

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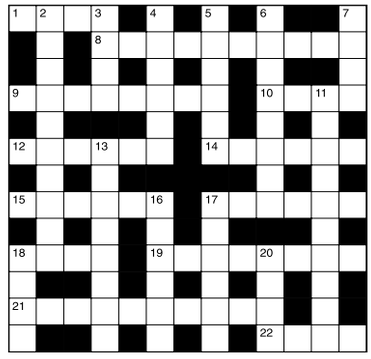
LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
N	G	X	M	P	I	Q	F	T	V	O	U	E
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
S	H	Z	R	A	L	Y	K	C	J	D	B	W

Double Crossword

Choose either quick or cryptic clues - both fit the same grid.



Cryptic Clues:

Across

1. Cut 7 with 1 for a change (4)
8. I am to take situation involving punishment task (10)
9. The era of scarcity is not a long one (8)
10. Harvest rotten fruit taken from 4 (4)
12. Profane oaths wear out as weapons (6)
14. Sucker put in bus to London (6)
15. Vest so made for giving warmth (6)
17. The gambler has reformed? (6)
18. At that time contained in earthenware jugs (4)
19. No, I'd rise to ridicule (8)
21. A very small volume needed for meeting records (6-4)
22. Little Edward in a whirl in the water (4)

Down

2. Does it indicate the darkest hour when they're on guard? (5-5)
3. Have something to eat right on the jetty (4)
4. A passer of weapons (6)
5. Value female donkey? (6)
6. Begin to be tip-top tipster? (5,3)
7. As obtained from a bad-tempered photographer? (4)
11. Honourably open - but the directors won't understand (5-5)
13. Being very hungry, talk wildly but with intelligence (8)
16. Very wet turf on lair (6)
17. Prohibit line on handcart (6)
18. Apparently I should receive this book (4)
20. Consideration for which one would leave (4)

Quick Clues:

Across

1. Rule (4)
8. Improve (10)
9. Provident (8)
10. Kind (4)
12. Handwriting (6)
14. Strain (6)
15. Hesitated (6)
17. Chastise (6)
18. Volcano (4)
19. Saucy (8)
21. Prudence (10)
22. Entrance (4)

Down

2. Sorcery (10)
3. Gape (4)
4. Let (6)
5. Zodiac sign (6)
6. Brothers (8)
7. Small valley (4)
11. Afterthought (10)
13. Example (8)
16. Make moist (6)
17. Wan (6)
18. Purposes (4)
20. Pain (4)

Sudoku

7						4		1
	4		7		8		6	
	6			9			5	
6			1		7			3
		8		4		2	1	
1			2		9			8
	9					1	2	
	8		6		1		7	
5			9					6

Fill in the grid below so that every column, every row and each of the 3x3 boxes contains all the digits from 1 to 9.

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTIONS >

7	1	2	6	4	8	9	5	3
5	3	6	1	9	2	7	4	8
9	4	8	7	3	5	1	2	6
2	6	4	5	8	7	3	9	1
3	5	7	4	1	9	6	8	2
1	8	9	2	6	3	5	7	4
8	2	5	3	7	6	4	1	9
4	7	3	9	2	1	8	6	5
6	9	1	8	5	4	2	3	7

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD SOLUTIONS: CRYPTIC - Across: 7 Blade; 8 Abashed; 9 Old hand; 10 Elect; 12 Stand aside; 15 Improbable; 18 Notes; 19 Raffish; 21 Sternly; 22 Nicer. Down: 1 Absolution; 2 Cards; 3 Beta; 4 Madden; 5 Baseball; 6 Cheerio; 11 There there; 13 Thousand; 14 Spotted; 16 Arrays; 17 Pitch; 20 Fine. QUICK - Across: 7 Impel; 8 Albumen; 9 Commons; 10 Trend; 12 Pugnacious; 15 Open-handed; 18 Tinge; 19 Migrant; 21 Concede; 22 Spurn. Down: 1 Discomfort; 2 Spume; 3 Also; 4 Pass on; 5 Obstacle; 6 Emperor; 11 Discontent; 13 Unheeded; 14 Meaning; 16 Number; 17 Gamut; 20 Gasp.

Thinking space

Quiz

1. In which European country is the region of Aragon?
2. What were the forenames of W.H. Auden?
3. On which island is the bay of Pigs?
4. In the film industry, what is a key grip?
5. Who constructed the labyrinth in Greek mythology?
6. What is a lava-lava?
7. What is the fifth sign of the zodiac?
8. In what year did rock singer Jim Morrison die?
9. What sort of flower is a naked lady?
10. Who wrote the play Separate Tables?

Last week's solutions:

Quiz: 1 Michael Foot; 2 Greece; 3 Sancho Panza; 4 July and August; 5 Potato; 6 Wildebeest; 7 Cavy; 8 16 or 18; 9 Venus; 10 Austria.

Niner: FULMINATE

Niner

Each number from 1 to 9 represents a different letter. Solve the clues and insert the letters in the appropriate squares to discover a word which uses all nine letters.

6721 gives a servant,
32458 gives an airman,
3746298 gives a fortune-teller.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

Dudley Chronicle Thursday, December 31, 2015

Refined but still lots of fun

By Sharon Walters

Going along to a Mazda dealer for a post Christmas scout for a new car is very tempting.

There are several finance offers across Mazda's award-winning SUV line-up – the CX-3 and CX-5. Plus these crossover models are offered in both front-wheel drive and winter friendly all-wheel drive.

Named 'Best Crossover' at the 2015 Scottish Car of the Year Awards, the new Mazda CX-3 line-up has efficient petrol and diesel SKYACTIV engines across 18 models.

With a choice of 11 petrol and seven diesel variants, the car comes with generous standard equipment and Mazda's latest i-ACTIVSENSE safety systems. SE models feature 16-inch alloy wheels, plus heated and power folding mirrors, while SE-L models add rear privacy glass and front LED fog lights.

At the top of the range, the Sport Nav is the first car in the class to come with LED headlights.

With its unique nocturnal appearance further enhanced by signature LED rear lights; 18-inch Gunmetal machined alloy wheels and chrome-accent door sills wrap up the distinctive look.

Whichever engine you choose, you get the same sharp exterior styling. The CX-3 has Mazda's bold Kodo design treatment, and takes its cues from the larger CX-5 and the 2 supermini. So you get the same bold front grille and mix of daring curves and creases.

I recently spent a week in the 2.0 litre 120ps 2WD which at £20,495 on-the-road proved an excellent package. The cabin is premium class and on top of the standard specification of seven-inch colour touch-screen, DAB radio, Bluetooth® and a multi-function steering wheel also gets navigation including three-years free European map updates, Bose® sound system, smart keyless entry and, in another first for the sector, Mazda's Active Driving Display head-up display system – a real bonus.

CX-3 has a user-friendly cabin layout with high material quality and design. Included are heated front seats, automatic climate control and rain-sensing wipers.

Active safety equipment includes a full complement of standard airbags, hill hold assist, tyre pressure monitoring system and dynamic stability control are standard across the range. SE-L and Sport Nav models also get Mazda's lane departure warning system and smart city brake support. All models get cruise control, while rear parking sensors are standard from SE-L grade onwards, and Sport Nav models also have a reversing camera.

You get a good looker, quality interior and bags of equipment but not at the expense of having fun behind the wheel

With a flexible cargo board boot floor, which can be raised to provide a flat load space when the standard 60:40 split fold rear seats are tumbled, the 350-litre boot is very practical.

So you get a good looker, quality interior and bags of equipment but all that does not come at the expense of having fun behind the wheel. Steering is well-weighted and is quick and precise, allowing you to place the vehicle exactly where you want it on the road. The high-riding stance does not detract from that driving engagement – the car feels composed and stable through winding roads. A pleasant drive through the Highlands and across to Mallaig clearly showed the car's ability and how nimble it can be to move in and out of those tight bends.

Excellent refinement and upmarket interiors – it's easy to see why the new Mazda CX-3 is so popular with UK car buyers.

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MOKKA		
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ANTARA		
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15/65 ANTARA DIAMOND 2.2 CDTi 163PS, Sovereign Silver	£23,245	£16,495
15/65 ANTARA DIAMOND 2.2 CDTi 163PS, Smoke Grey	£23,245	£16,495

* Was price is based on current list price

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VAUXHALL

Trip of lifetime with Vauxhall

Wolverhampton motorists Nick and Dawn Bohannan, recently completed the road trip of a lifetime in a new Vauxhall Cascada Elite.

Purchased from local Vauxhall retailer, Evans Halshaw Wolverhampton the Cascada Elite CDTI is the first Vauxhall the Bohannans have ever owned.

Finished in limited edition white, with full leather interior, and European maps on the built-in Sat Nav, the Cascada was designed with the help of the team at the dealership, so the Bohannans could experience the holiday of their dreams.

The couple travelled all the way from their home in Penn, down to Portsmouth then chased the sun further still all the way to Provence in the South of France. On the way they stopped off at beautiful attractions such as the Loire Valley, and even followed in the tyre treads of champions in a visit to Monaco and the famous Grand Prix track.

Nick said: "This trip was something my wife and I had been wanting to do for a while and finally decided that this was our year to do it! The team at the dealership were really helpful and made sure we got everything we needed.

"The continental sat nav made all the difference and gave us the freedom to go wherever we wanted. To top it off the car is incredible, very comfortable, roomy and economical; I'd highly recommend it!"

All in all the Bohannans and their Cascada travelled just over 2,600 miles in two weeks and even that wasn't enough, as the pair are already planning their next road trip through Spain.

Ben Vale, dealer principal at Evans Halshaw Vauxhall Wolverhampton, said: "It's lovely that we were able to help Nick and Dawn fulfil their dream of a road trip holiday, I was confident that the Cascada would do them proud, so when they dropped in to tell us how fantastic their trip had been it was really heart-warming.

"It's a fantastic car and Nick and Dawn are a great example of how chatting through everything you want from a car with your sales leader can ensure we make the best recommendations for you.

"We wish them all the best on their next trip!"

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Ice Blue, 48,273 miles
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3 door, White, 32,174 miles
WAS £8999
NOW £8499

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5 door, Diesel, Haptic Blue, 32,315 miles
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09 REG	VAUXHALL CORSA 1.4 DESIGN 5DR SILVER 54207 MILES	£4,699
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13 REG	TOYOTA 1.0 VVTI ICE 5DR AIR CON WHITE 26799 MILES	£5,999
11 REG	MAZDA 2 1.3 TAKUYA 5DR MAROON 33505 MILES	£5,999
62 REG	VAUXHALL CORSA 1.2 SXI 3DR A/CON BLACK 22126 MILES	£5,999
62 REG	VW UP 1.0 3DR MOVE UP WHITE 7091 MILES	£6,299
10 REG	ALFA MITO 1.416V VELOCE 3DR RED 31176 MILES	£5,999
59 REG	CITROEN 1.6HDI EXCLUSIVE REAR SENSORS MET RED 36673 MILES	£6,499
61 REG	HONDA JAZZ 1.4 I-VTEC ES 5DR FSH REAR SENSORS LUNAR 35013 MILES	£6,999
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11 REG	VOLVO 1.6 DIESEL EDRIVE ES ESTATE GREY 49972 MILES	£8,999
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New Astra works hard and is loyal companion

By Matt Kimberley

It's the most important Vauxhall arriving this year. Has the compact hatch got the magic to take on its key rivals?

The Astra is an underrated, but evergreen compact family hatch, as happy taking the kids on a short break away as it is cutting a path through the city. There's no radical departure for 2016, although the sharp-eyed will notice a nip here and a tuck there.

There's an excellent new colour touch-screen that's standard across the range. It gives the whole product a lift and helps it make a better first impression.

It's a sharp-looking thing, if a bit on the conservative side. Being built in Britain won't do its appeal this side of Dover any harm, either. Whichever model you choose, you end up with a pleasantly stylish and definitely inoffensive car. You'll never object to having it on your drive.

It's quite sensitive to trim grades, though, so whereas the fantastic top-spec cars with all the interior trimmings look like they've come straight from the top drawer, the fragile rubberised handbrake grip and cheap-looking plastics on the low-end versions leave a lot to be desired and can start to look tatty very quickly.

Happy

There's a handy boot at the back, more than big enough for most tasks, but if you're toting babies, you'll struggle to get much more than a chunky pushchair into it without putting the conveniently split rear seats down.

Front seaters will be happy enough, especially with the uncommonly well-shaped seat backs that give superb lumbar support. The glove box is shed-spacious but the door pocket shapes and cupholder designs could be better thought out.

Under the bonnet there is a 1.0-litre turbocharged petrol engine. It can't make the Astra a rocket ship, but if you're gentle, you'll see fuel economy you'd struggle to better in an eco-diesel. I found it no problem to hover around 60mpg in relatively traffic-free driving. Alright, you do need to put some effort in, but the potential is there.

The dinky engine is perfect for chopping around urban and suburban routes. It's impressively linear once the turbo kicks in, making it smooth, forgiving and easy to get used to. It warms up faster than a moth on a sunbed and it's perfect for no-fuss short trips. The five-speed gearbox is light and precise, with tall gearing that partly offsets the lack of a sixth, but it's clear this version isn't meant to cover serious motorway mileage. It's a nice steer, though, responding quite keenly to tugs at the wheel and scampering along winding roads with gusto. The brakes on this nearly-new car were very grabby, but that should hopefully settle down with mileage.

The Astra is a solid car. You know what you're getting and, although some of the materials on basement models aren't up to scratch, at the very least, the car does a good job of providing straight-down-the-line mid-size transport for people who don't want to spend the extra on a slightly more spacious compact crossover or SUV.

Vauxhall dealers are usually open to a little haggling, too, so don't take the retail price as gospel. You should pay less than for a broadly equivalent crossover, so there's good value to be had here even if the fashion is currently for faux-4x4s.

This is a car for ordinary people. People who want a well-rounded car to give them transport, enough space and, crucially, the ability to cope with everything from taking the in-laws to Sunday lunch to taking the kids to the seaside. Parents will appreciate this sort of versatility, while some might prefer the lower seating position relative to SUVs, for the better outward view it offers during low-speed manoeuvres.

This car summed up in a single word: Studious.

If this car was a student at Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry, it would be in Hufflepuff house. It's a hard worker and a loyal companion.

TESTED

Vauxhall Astra, from £15,295

Engine: 1.0-litre turbocharged petrol producing 103bhp and 125lb/ft

Transmission: Five-speed manual driving the front wheels

Performance: Top speed 124mph, 0-62mph in 10.5 seconds

Economy: 67.3mpg combined

Emissions: 96g/km

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62	Scenic 1.5 DCI Dyn Tomtom Blue Only 10000 Miles	£9,995
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62	Astra 1.6 SRI 180 Red Only 16000 Miles	£8,795
62	3008 1.6 HDI Active 2 Black Only 17000 Miles	£8,995
12	Berlingo 1.6 HDI VTR+ EGS6 Grey Only 17000 Miles	£7,995
62	Note 1.6 N-Tec+ Auto Blue Only 17000 Miles	£7,295
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12	DS3 1.6 D Style Auto White 34k	£7,995
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Race car for road setting new limits

By John Griffiths

Honda celebrated 50 years of sales in Britain in 2015 and it's been a golden year for the company in many ways.

The icing on the cake was first and third places in the British Touring Car Championship for the popular duo of Gordon Shedden and Wolverhampton's Matt Neal in the new Civic Type-R.

It's a case of just desserts for the engineers, too, who produced a superb handling car which manages to wring a brutal 306bhp out of a mere two-litre capacity engine, setting new limits for a front wheel drive car.

Performance figures of 0 to 62mph in 5.7 seconds and a top speed of 167 mph – combined with superior cornering ability – had already given it the record for the breed on the tough Nurburgring in a time which put it up there with supercars costing three or four times as much.

And that really is another figure to leave you speechless: how Honda manages to sell what is billed as 'a race car for the road' for £30,000, the price of a fairly ordinary family saloon. It's little wonder that not only is there a full order book for the car, but there's a waiting list.

You'd expect Honda to produce a good engine: it is the world's biggest manufacturer of engines, powering everything from tiny grass strimmers to Formula One cars.

But conquering the Nurburging is not just about outright power, it's about stability and dynamic handling too with 73 bends in its 12.93 mile length on what is widely regarded as the toughest test in the world. That's how the Type-R won itself a place among the big engined exotica by completing its run in a time of seven minutes, 50.63 seconds.

This breadth of ability is what Honda's engineers were looking for and why enthusiasts had to wait for five years for the car, which is no tweaked version of the family-friendly Civic or an upgraded version of its predecessor. The engine, for example, combines Honda's thrill-a-minute VTEC variable valve system with a turbocharger for the first time.

Power delivery feels, and sounds, very different. Gone is the sudden surge of acceleration and change in engine note at around 5,500rpm as the VTEC system's second cams and high-lift valve operation comes in and sends you screaming towards the 8,000rpm limit. For the Type R the engineers turned the system on its head, with the high valve lift phase occurring at low to medium revs to eliminate turbo lag and give you more grunt lower down. The result is smooth, accessible power right across the rev range. Now you get all those 306 horses at 6,500rpm, while maximum torque (a huge 400Nm) is there from just 2,500rpm.

Beast

In standard mode, the Type-R is still a genuine performer on the roads, a comfortable ride by sportng car standards and decent economy – up to 38.7mpg and a 170g/km CO2 rating. Press the 'Plus R' button and it becomes a very different beast. The instrument dials glow red, the steering and throttle responses sharpen up dramatically and the suspension gets 30 per cent stiffer.It's a car most buyers will want to take on a track day.

The Type-R has a mixture of mechanical, aerodynamic and electronic features to ensure you can out the power down safety.

The adaptive damping system works on all four wheels together or independently. Its very effective during extreme cornering too, keeping the car flat and stable for optimum grip and ride comfort. Try hard enough on the track, and especially in the wet, and of course the Type R will still want to move sideways, but it's toned down – more of a warning than creating any nasty oversteer/understeer surprises.

The Type R's natural responsiveness is boosted by a new 'agile handling assist' feature, working with the more familiar electronic stability control. In simple terms you get a more rapid steering response and 'turn-in' because it applies a light, imperceptible touch of brake to the inner wheel. Handy on the track, it's a potential lifesaver on the road if you have to suddenly make a sharp avoidance manoeuvre.

The engineers also developed a new limited slip differential, balanced drive shafts and a unique 'dual axis' design for the front end which work together to improve traction and cut torque steer. It also means you can safely put down more power, and earlier, through a corner.

Inside you get all the features and practicality you'd expect of the Civic range's flagship, such as satnav, climate control and a sound system with Bluetooth, with added touches such as alloy pedals and gear shift.

It's interesting to note that the first Honda Civic sold here back in 1972 was a classic Mini-sized batchback with an 1,169cc engine. Now there is a whole range of Civic hatchbacks and tourers with the ultra-economical 1.6 diesel among the best sellers. But there's no shortage of buyers either for what is, undoubtedly, the ultimate front wheel drive performance car at a fraction of the price of some of its exotic rivals.

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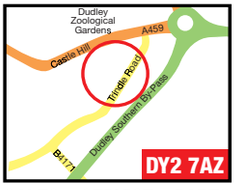

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Every day our customers get a great response from Classified Advertising.
So could you by calling our friendly experienced Sales Advisors on 01902 319191.

5 Business & Farming

business opportunities

READERS are recommended to take appropriate professional advice before entering any obligations.

commercial premises sale / let

UNITS AND OFFICE SPACE to let in Oldbury, West Bromwich and Walsall. Easy Terms. Ashmore Properties: 0121 520 5318.

business directory

accountants

ACCOUNTANCY SERVICES for Small Business. Competitive Rates. Call 01902 882600

6 Property

accommodation to let

A 1 BEDROOM FLAT TO LET Ground Floor chapel ash DSS ok 01902 686605

NOTICE TO READERS
Readers are advised to seek independent legal advice before entering into any financial commitments.

NOTICE TO READERS It is an offence under the Accommodation Agencies Act 1953, for an Agency to charge a fee simply for the registration of your requirements and/or supplying particulars of premises to let.

HIGH QUALITY STUDIO FLATS Tettenhall area, No DSS. 07976 263435 / 01902 700028.

MERRIDALE ROOM to let. £63pw inc most bill not to be overlooked!! DSS ok. Call 07723 016692.

ONE BEDROOM flat, Gornal, first floor, good condition, £300pcm. 07958 339269.

properties wanted

A LOCAL BUYER pays full market value and more for your property. Call Rick 07729 297901

I BUY HOUSES, any condition. Top prices paid. For free valuation. Call Nikki 07910 539 886

overseas property

NOTICE TO READERS
Readers are advised to seek independent legal advice before entering into any financial commitments.

7 Jobs

building & construction

STEEL ERECTORS Required to join directly employed erection teams with previous experience in erecting structural steel. Full time position with good rates of pay. Please contact Rob/Kevin on 01384 258400.

courses

CRH Transport Training Train and Test at our centre in West Brom 0121 3231777 crhtraining.co.uk

engineering

STEEL FABRICATORS/PLATERS Required to a join structural steelwork company. People required with experience working from drawings, able to manufacture all types of structural steel. Full time position with good rates of pay and conditions. Please contact Gary on 01384 258400

industrial & technical

TEKLA OPERATOR Required with experience in detailing all types of structural steelwork. Full time position. Please contact Stuart on 01384 258400

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100% MARKET VALUE IN 28 DAYS!
Tel: (24 hrs) 0800 612 8495 or 01902 212310
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TUESDAY
WEDNESDAY
JOBSDAY
FRIDAY
SATURDAY
SUNDAY

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full time - general

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An opportunity has been created for anyone that is at the start of their career and looking for a position that can provide full training towards an AAT Qualification or an ICAEW Training contract. You will be provided with full funding for your studies along with expenses for any books and material required.
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You will be working alongside a Manager and other trainees, completing a number of duties. Anyone applying for the position should be able to demonstrate:
- A committed attitude to a long term career in finance
- Willingness to learn new skills and systems
- Excellent communication skills
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8 Motoring

cars over £1500

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Packages start from as little as
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Plus
6 nights free if you do not sell.
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FORD FIESTA ZETEC S1.6 TDCi (95) 11 plate, 48k,SH, frozen white. All extras. Immaculate throughout. £6,495. 07970 705466(T) or P/X

OLDFIELD AND SON VW Polo 1.6S 2007, Black finish: £2,495. Peugeot 307S, 2007, Black finish: £1,595. Vauxhall Zafira, 2005, Black, 7 Seater: £1,495. 07913 981460.

cars under £1500

ADVERTISERS ARE REMINDED
that the Business Advertisements (Disclosure) Order of 1977 requires that advertisements must clearly differentiate between Private and Trade.

BMA www.bmacars.com Est. Here 25 Years
25 CARS UNDER £1,000
Full MOT's
07956 988517
Dale Street, Bilston, WV14 7JY

MITSUBISHI SHOGUN Pinin, 04, 1.8, MoT Aug 2016, leather, alloys, AC, 1 owner, immaculate condition. £1,400 ono. 07930 374986.

RENAULT MEGAN 1.4, 02 reg, fair condition. £250 ono. 07969 193128.

ROVER 45, 02 reg, 9 months MoT, new head gasket, £350. Telephone 01902 411467.

classic cars

JAGUAR XJS 4.0
1991. Only 66,000 miles. Light metallic blue. Sports auto box. Heated leather seats. SH, 10 months MoT. Good condition for year.
£3,500 ono.
07904 662468 (Bridgnorth).

WANTED, CLASSIC Cars. Private cash buyer.Instant cash settlement. Any age. Any condition. 01630 652993 or 07773 462797.

commercial vehicles

MUST BE SEEN
FORD TRANSIT VAN
MWB, 2000cc, diesel, Y reg, full MoT, 117,000 miles, clean throughout, reliable runner.
£1,450.
07817 665278.
MUST BE SEEN

driving tuition

Drive All Seasons
Lessons Starting FROM
5 Lessons £50
10 Lessons £89
Manual & Automatic
Franchise Opportunities Available
COVERING WOLVERHAMPTON, WALSALL & CANNOCK.
Free Unlimited Theory
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www.driveallseasons.co.uk

AMAZING OFFER 5 lessons £40. 10 lessons £80. £18 an hour there after. Call now 07958 051263.

Homer's
Mini, Clio, Corsa, Fiesta, Punto, 207, KA, Fiat 500, Yaris.
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MANUAL & AUTOMATIC
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01384 234954 / 0121 5640090
01902 580065
www.homersdrivingschool.co.uk

motorbikes

HONDA REBEL 250 CLASSIC 1998, excellent condition for age. £1,100 ono. Contact Lisa 07505 357726.

WE BUY BIKES immaculate, as new, garaged / non runners. Cash paid. Peter All Bikes, 01902 312939 bikesallspares@gmail.com

scrap vehicles

OUR ADVERTISERS are reminded that it is an offence under the Scrap Metal Dealers Act 2013 to buy scrap cars/metal for cash.

MCB
TOP PRICES PAID FOR ALL SCRAP CARS, VANS, BIKES, CLASSICS
Tel: 01902 408176
1000's of parts available at all times
MONMORE RD. WV1 2TZ

A BETTER PRICE
for scrap or damaged cars and commercials. Spares for sale.
NINE LOCKS VEHICLE DISMANTLERS LTD
Brierley Hill 01384 76566 or 70553. Evenings 75397. DY5 3JZ.

ABC AUTO SALVAGE WANTED URGENT
Scrap & MOT Failures Best Prices Paid ELV Registered Spares Always Available
0121 557 0800 or 0121 557 0400. Evening 07813 184611 Oldbury Area.

spares & accessories

clutches / brakes / gearboxes

A CLUTCH CHANGE MOBILE
30 yrs experience
ALL AREAS COVERED
Call Bob
01384 251328 or 07972 169554 anytime
For Example:
Citroen C1, C2, C3
Hyundai 110
Toyota Yaris
Clios & Micras
Ring for quotes on others!

mobile mechanics

MOBILE MECHANICS Service & repairs. Headgasket, clutches and cambelts. 07747 848469.

spares/parts

BATTERIES FROM £29.99: Corsa, Fiesta, Focus, Clio etc: 2 year guarantee - Wolves Hire - 01902 746723. Tettenhall Road WV6 0LE.

vehicles wanted

CROWN MOTORS guarantee best price for your unwanted cars/vans. 07903 549849, 01902 597035.

10 Personals

general

HAVE YOU CHECKED your advertisement today? We would respectfully remind advertisers that it is their responsibility to inform the publishers of any mistakes or inaccuracies on the first day of publication.

ADVERTISEMENTS CONDITIONS OF ACCEPTANCE

1. **Midland News Association Limited** All publications in this group are published by the Midland News Association Limited, registered office Queen Street, Wolverhampton WV1 1ES ('the Company') and this is the address to which any notices should be sent.
2. **Acceptance** The Company will only accept advertising on these standard terms and no other contract terms or conditions will apply other than those which are implied by statute and cannot lawfully be excluded. In particular the Company will not accept advertising on the basis of advertiser's terms and conditions.
3. **Content of Advertisements** All advertisements must be legal decent honest and truthful. Advertisements must comply with the British Code of Advertising Practice and all other codes under the general supervision of the Advertising Standards Authority. Advertisements must comply with the requirements of all current legislation including but not limited to the following:- All advertisements must clearly differentiate between trade and private advertising as required by the Business Advertisements (Disclosure) Order 1977. Advertisements offering credit or hire facilities must comply with the Consumer Credit (Advertisement) Regulations 1980.
   All descriptions of goods must be accurate and in no way infringe the provisions of the Trades Descriptions Act 1968.
   Advertisements must not contain any material which is defamatory. You must have permission to use any material contained in your advertisement and must not infringe the copyright moral rights or any other right of any third party.
   The Company reserves the right to refuse to carry any advertisement or to require amendment of any advertisement in its absolute discretion.
4. **Appearance of Advertisements** Whilst the Company makes every effort to comply with requests, publication on a particular date or in a particular position cannot be guaranteed. The Company reserves the right to alter, suspend, cancel or reject an advertisement at its discretion even after the same has been accepted for publication without being liable to compensate you. You will not be charged for any advertisement which does not appear. If only a part of a series of advertisements appears you will only be charged for the advertisements in the series which actually appear. The Company does not guarantee the publication or extent of supporting editorial and your obligation to pay for advertising will not under any circumstances be dependent upon the appearance or content of editorial. No liability will be accepted for non-appearance of editorial. The Company does not guarantee that advertising will not appear for similar or the same subject matter to your advertisement and no liability shall be accepted as a result of such advertising appearing. It is the advertiser's responsibility to provide any amended copy, whether by electronic or other format, and the Company does not guarantee that it will be able to or will agree to modify, amend or alter any file or copy supplied to it.
5. **Liability The Company's** liability for any loss or damage caused by any error or omission in the advertisement or any other breach of contract shall not in any circumstances exceed a full refund of any price paid by the advertiser to the Company for the publication of the advertisement or the cost of a further or corrective advertisement of the same type as that which originally appeared. Where a series of advertisements is booked the Company's liability shall not in any circumstances exceed the value of the first advertisement in the series. In the event of any error, misprint or omission in the publication of the advertisement the Company will either re-publish the advertisement or the relevant parts of the advertisement or make a reasonable refund of or adjustment to the cost of the advertisement. If the error does not materially detract from the advertisement then no re-publication, refund or adjustment will be made. It is the advertiser's responsibility to check the content of advertisements and the Company will not accept any liability for loss or damage, or obligation to republish or make a refund or adjustment, arising from re-publication of an advertisement containing an error, misprint or omission which has not been identified by the advertiser after first publication.
6. **Box numbers The Company** accepts no liability for loss or damage caused by delay in forwarding or omission to forward to the advertiser replies to Box Numbers. Box Numbers must not be used for sending goods, distributing circulars or communications from agents. The Company reserves the right to open and inspect all replies to Box Number and to destroy goods, circulars of communications from agents which are discovered during an inspection.
7. **Inspection The Company** shall be entitled at any time to inspect any goods or services advertised and may decline to carry further advertising if such inspection is not permitted or if in the Company's opinion the provision of further advertising facilities is not appropriate in view of the nature or quality of the goods or services.
8. **Indemnity** The advertiser, including any advertising agency involved in placing any advertisement, warrants that it has permission to use for publication by electronic and printed means all material which is included in the advertisement. The advertiser and any advertising agency involved in placing any advertisement agree to indemnify the Company in respect of all charges, costs, claims or damage arising out of the publication of the advertisement, whether the same result from actual or threatened legal action or from some other cause.
9. **Cancellation** On a request for cancellation or amendment of a classified advertisement being accepted, you will be given a cancellation or amendment number which must be quoted in all subsequent correspondence. Payment of the originally agreed price will be required in full for any advertisement in relation to which the advertiser is unable to supply a valid cancellation or amendment number. Cancellation can only be accepted if the Company is notified of the cancellation by no later than the following deadlines:-
   Lineage, Semi Display - By no later than 6.30pm on the working day prior to publication. Advertisements to appear on Monday must be cancelled by 10 am on the preceding Saturday
   Classified Display - By no later than 24 hours before the date of publication
   Colour/Features - By no later than 10 clear days before the date of publication
   To cancel Lineage, Semi Display and Classified Display advertisements please telephone 01902 317878. To cancel Colour/Features advertisements please speak to the Representative through whom the advertisement was booked.
10. **Rates** Advertising rates are as laid out in the Company's current rate card which is available on request from the Company's offices. The rates may be varied from time to time in the Company's absolute discretion and without prior notification of the intended variation. The revised rate will be charged for any advertising ordered after the date of variation.
    All gross advertising rates except classified lineage and semi-display are subject to a 0.1% Advertising Standards Board of Finance levy payable by advertisers to help finance the self-regulatory system administered by the Advertising Standards Authority.
11. **Payment** The Company reserves the right to require pre-payment as a condition of any advertisement being published. Where pre-payment is not required unless different credit terms have been agreed with the advertiser in writing payment must be made within 14 days of the date of issue of the Company's invoice. An additional £2.00 booking charge will be payable if the invoice is not paid in full within this 14 day period.
    Any additional credit facilities which are offered are at the Company's absolute discretion. The advertiser's liability shall be for the full amount of all advertising ordered and shall not be limited to the amount of any credit limit which the Company may impose.
    Payment may be made by [method] cash, cheque or credit/debit card. The advertiser's obligation to pay for other items on an account shall not be affected by the existence of any query over an individual item within that account.
12. **Data Protection Act** The advertiser's details will be retained by the Company for the purposes of administering our accounts records and so that the Company may notify the advertiser of future advertising opportunities which may be of interest to you. By placing advertising with the Company the advertiser agrees to your details being used for this purpose.
13. **Applicable Law** These conditions of acceptance shall be governed by and interpreted in accordance with the law of England and Wales.

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GROUNDWORKS • CIVILS • LANDSCAPE

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We always strive to deliver customer satisfaction.

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*Tree Surgeon Specialist *Stump Grinding/Root Removal
*Hedges Pruned/Shaped *Jungles Cleared/Full Landscapes
*Fencing *Turfing *Concreting *Driveways & Patios
*Plus Much More Call Now For a No Obligation Quotation

24/7 365 emergency callout service
01384 213644 or 07733 226568

AGE CONCERN & Local Authority Contractor, N.P.T.C. qualified, Public Liability Insurance (£5 million) All staff C.R.B. Certified
PART OF THE ROWAN GROUP OF COMPANIES

OAKHAM TREE SURGERY

- Professional, Fully Qualified Insured Tree Surgeon
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- Crown Reduction-Lifts
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24 Hour Emergency Call out

FREE QUOTATIONS

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- ✓ Central Heating & Boilers
- ✓ Power Flushing
- ✓ Boiler Servicing & Repairs
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Combi Boiler change from £950
SPECIAL OFFERS ON FULL HEATING SYSTEMS
Also Warranty on Vailliant up to 10 years and Worcester 6 years
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Plumbing & Heating

Plumb Serve
Plumbing & Heating SPECIALISTS

Special Offer Boiler Service £50

- Taps, Toilets, Baths & Waste
- Full Bathroom, En Suites Installed
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- Cookers & Fires, Installed & Serviced
- Boiler Install, Serviced & Repaired
- Landlord Safety Checks
- Full Central Heating Systems

24hr call out, Call us on
07513 094763
Card payments accepted
safe register

Plumbing

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Give Ian a call
I fit Bathrooms, Kitchens, Outside Taps, Flat Pack, etc.
No job too small! No call out charge
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★ Interior/Exterior Painting And Decorating
★ All Aspects Of Plastering And Rendering
★ Fascias, Soffits & Guttering
★ Roof Repairs & Re-pointing ★ Pressure washing
★ Plus Much More....

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All aspects covered
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Trees felled, hedges trimmed, stumps removed, tree reports.
Fully insured.
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- Conifers reduced & trimmed
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- Jungles & gardens cleared
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Flat roofing specialists
All types of flat roofing systems
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*Advertise any item ***FREE*** up to the value of ***£250,*** simply fill out the

ADVERT DETAILS - (ONE WORD PER BOX, 12 WORDS IN TOTAL)

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ADVERT 2			
ADVERT 3			

Name: _____ Address: _____

Postcode: _____ Tel No: _____

Please send to: ClassifiedAds, Express & Star, 51-53 Queen St, Wolverhampton WV1 1ES.

IT'S ABSOLUTELY FREE

*Private advertisers only, no guns, pets, or livestock. Limited time only
Free adverts are published within 7 days of receipt, in-paper and online and are limited to 3 lines maximum

Buy Local, **Sell** Local
01902 317878

ClassifiedAds

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2. E-mail us at... zac.clarke@expressandstar.co.uk
3. Post to... Zac Clarke, Dudley Chronicle, 51-53 Queen St, Wolverhampton WV1 1ES

Making Friends

Try it.. You'll love it!

YOUR regional dating service, run by the dating experts who have been established since 1990. **REAL people in YOUR region**

Here's how to use your dating service ...

Place your advert call:
0844 381 5936
and follow the simple instructions

To **Place** your ad by text
Simply text **REG** followed by your first name, date of birth, area and your advert (max 155 characters) and send to **80098**
FREE Standard Network rates apply.

To **Reply** to members from your landline call:
0906 500 3955
calls cost £1.55 per min plus your phone company's access charge.

Have the adverts 6-digit box no written down and do ***key-it-in promptly*** when asked. Don't forget to leave contact details for replies.

Or ***Text...*** **REPLY26** (leave space) box number (leave space) and then enter your message & send to **80098** eg: **REPLY26** 123456 **hi get in touch...** then send to **80098** Successfully forwarded messages cost £1.50 per message (Max 160 characters). You must exchange 7 messages each before you can swap contact details. Messages may be moderated for your safety and security.

Date **ONLINE**
YOU can now date online or via your **mobile**
Simply ***VISIT*** us at:

Been left a message? ***Pickup*** your replies:
0906 500 3957
calls cost £1.55 per min plus your phone company's access charge.

http://dating.expressandstar.com

THE biggest UK on-line database of 17 million UK REAL users waiting to meet ***you.. visit..*** http://dating.expressandstar.com

Women seeking men

REMEMBER: Calls cost £1.55 per minute plus your phone company's access charge. Texts cost £1.50 per message received.

SAMANTHA, 42yrs, seeks gent for festive season, doesn't wait to be along again. Age/looks unimportant, GSOH essential. **Box: 4140774. Text only.**

ALEXA 49 - slim, attractive, long-haired music loving female, with many interests including dining out, the arts, photography WLTM similar male. **Text only to Mailbox no: 5345662**

KATIE 35yrs, slender well educated brunette seeks no strings mutual pleasure with gent 40+ Must be discreet, married or single. ACA. **Tel: 0906 515 3003 Box 419673**

CHLOE pretty single female 36yrs, dark hair/eyes, slim build, very lonely and looking for reliable discreet male for mutual companionship maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 420359**

DISCREET man wanted by married lady for no strings fun. I'm called Sarah and am 37yrs. Pls call, ACA. **Tel No: 0906 515 3007 Box 418167**

JANE, young 41, very broadminded seeks chap any age for discreet no strings fun, any age, no time wasters ACA. **Tel: No: 0906 515 3011 Box: 409715**

JANE, young 41, very broadminded seeks chap any age for discreet no strings fun, any age, no time wasters ACA. **Tel: No: 0906 515 3008 Box: 409715**

ANN,38, very attractive female, N/S, positive attitude to life, WLTM similar kind male with a lot of get up and go for romance and fun times. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 420355**

MAUREEN, discreet sensual lady, 42yrs seeks daytime fun at her home. ACA. **Tel: 0906 515 3015 Box: 405297**

YVONNE, single mum, happy with life, but would like to meet someone to share fun times with. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 420269**

SOPHIA young 40yrs, married but bored, seeks discreet adult fun, any area, all calls answered. **Tel: 0906 515 3019 Box: 413399**

JACKIE lonely and looking for male company, 48-65. Need a bit of love and affection? Then I'm your girl. call me. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 418169**

FELICITY, 38yrs, attractive, petite but shapely lady seeks gent for indoor activities! Age/looks/marital status unimportant but must be discreet and non demanding. **Tel: 0906 515 3023 Box 420235**

SARAH, curvaceous brunette, 35, passionate nature, solvent, OHAC, WLTM date again, looking for male to take me out. Looks/Age unimportant. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 420207**

LOUISE, pretty hairdresser, works long hours, finds it hard to meet a boyfriend, 34yrs, own flat. **Text only to Mailbox no: 4192572**

LYN, 43, divorced very lonely single mum, young looking, slim, attractive, WLTM similar male for companionship. Age/looks/Status unimportant. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 418795**

JENNI, single mum seeks single dad, own home, can accommodate and loves spoiling her man. **Text only to Mailbox no: 4115108**

JANE, 47, voluptuous female, long hair, brown eyes, generous curves, would love to spend cosy nights in with that special male. Age/looks unimportant. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 417985**

SUSANNAH, 48, curvy female, romantic, warm and cuddly, seeks similar kind male for a loving relationship with lots of cuddles and kisses. Looks unimportant. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 417341**

LUCY, 32, blonde, tall and slim, looking for a casual fling, nothing serious. Discretion needed and assured. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 420237**

KELLY young attractive vivacious 48yr old lady, loves good food, cosy nights in/out, holidays etc, WLTM male for mutual companionship **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 420195**

CATHY, 42, good looking brunette with a real passion for life, seeking male for happy times, dates, chats, romance and more. Pls call. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 420175**

TARA 22 tall slim but curvy with legs that go all the way up to heaven, WLTM very appreciative confident male for adult fun. Contact me anytime. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 414701**

FEMALE, dark haired 5'10, curvy, likes reading, walking, cinema, seeks male 40-50 for lasting relationship. **Text only to Mailbox no: 5077545**

PROFESSIONAL black female age 52, enjoys evenings and days out, would like to meet similar Midlands male. **Text only to Mailbox no: 5315901**

CATHY, 42, good looking brunette with a real passion for life, seeking male for happy times, dates, chats, romance and more. pls call. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 420073**

LISA 38 slim attractive blonde, looking for a man who will appreciate a feminine, fashionable, fun, romantic sensual woman with a mind of her own. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 419839**

FEMALE fun brunette, attractive, 26, seeking male for friendship, maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 416287**

MAGGIE, 72 yrs young, good sense of humour, well presented, WLTM kind, sincere chappie to share coffee and a chat. **Text only to Mailbox no: 5310040**

LOUISE 35, dark hair, blue eyes, attractive ex air hostess, looking for fun times with older male for romantic nights in and more. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 420043**

JAN 35yr old blue eyed blonde, outgoing, friendly, WLTM passionate guy to share good wine, good conversation, flirting and fun times. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 418609**

39 yr old independent single Mom, knows the benefit of having a good man in the picture. **Text only to Mailbox no: 5084796**

FRANCES, 45, busty female, loves nights in/out, seeking uncomplicated male who can occupy my free time for quality companionship. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 420003**

FEMALE, seeks fun loving male who likes a drink and a laugh, to enjoy erotic experiences with a curvy brunette. Discretion guaranteed. **Text only to Mailbox no: 5079311**

REMEMBER: Calls cost £1.55 per minute plus your phone company's access charge. Texts cost £1.50 per message received.

MARY, pretty, friendly, lots of fun, lives in Kidderminster, loves the theatre, opera, ballet, WLTM a lovely, charming, funny, genuine guy, 30s, to settle down with. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 419883**

LOU, 45, lives in Shrewsbury, WLTM a lady between 42-49 with blue eyes, must be kind, caring and funny to mend my broken heart, someone who likes to curl up on the sofa for cozy nights in. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 419855**

FREYA 24yr old single mum, looking for male for free time frolics, call me if you're interested, it could be fun! **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 419851**

SARAH 38, slim, nice looking, sensual, tactile, no ties, WLTM kind, loving male to enjoy affectionate relationship. Any age/looks. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 419821**

PAT 66, attractive, N/S, likes reading, nights out, seeks gent for friendship, days out and more. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 418277**

68YR old widow, attractive, seeks sincere, N/S male, likes reading, meals out and walks. West Midlands. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 414773**

JULIA 47, looking for genuine, reasonably attractive male friend, may to lead to more. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 419695**

LADY Penelope seeks her very own Parker (47-58) to go on a voyage of discovery and romance. **Text only to Mailbox no: 4550237**

BLACK lady seeks white male over 60, any location, for friendship and hopefully a lot more. **Text only to Mailbox no: 4256384**

CHARLENE, 24, petite curvy young blonde seeks similar cheeky, fun loving guy for lots of fun and loving. ACA. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 419597**

JOANNA, 36, petite, auburn haired female, lovely figure seeks loving older male for fun nights out and cosy nights in. Maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 419595**

SHARON 32, attractive black single mum of one, very tactile and passionate, WLTM male 45-65yrs for fun meets. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 419579**

MARIE, 43, fun blue-eyed brunette, fit and active, seeks similar male to have a laugh with. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 419417**

KAREN 50, widow, likes swimming, horse riding, keep fit, clay pigeon shooting, GSOH, N/S, non drinker, seeks male. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 415211**

CURVY, farm girl at heart, 32, 5ft 10, single mum, caring, kind, shy, likes walks, cooking WLTM tactile male farmer for LTR. **Text only to Mailbox no: 5067001**

FEMALE medium build, blonde hair, 5ft 5ins, seeks male, 50-58, GSOH, loving, caring and understanding. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 415429**

WIDOW 50, blonde hair, GSOH, 5ft 5ins, slim, seeks male. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 415767**

MARIE, 43, fun blue-eyed brunette, fit and active, seeks similar male to have a laugh with. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 419417**

FEMALE 50's, 5ft 5ins, blonde hair, blue eyes, slim, seeks gent with GSOH, loving, caring and understanding. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 415871**

BLUE eyed female, blonde hair, slim, GSOH, loving, caring, understanding, seeking similar male, 55-55. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 416989**

ATTRACTIVE professional lady, widow, 50's, likes walks, sight seeing, theatre, meals out, seeks genuine, professional gent, 5ft 9ins plus to make life more enjoyable. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 418615**

AMANDA, 36, tall, slim, busty brunette seeks man, any age, any area, for discreet daytime fun. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 418117**

CAROL Ann, sensitive slim brunette very romantic seeks tall handsome male for fun, friendship and lots of TLC. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 419385**

KIRSTEN, 36, attractive, blonde and very bored, seeking open-minded decent male for fun/friendship, 40-60yrs. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 419383**

VAL 41, pretty, cuddly, flirty, seeks similar fun loving male for an uncomplicated no strings relationship. Age/looks unimportant. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 416601**

MID naughty forties female looking fun, thrills and discreet meets, give me a call, you wont be disappointed. Any age with own accommodation. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 409109**

DIVORCED female, attractive, sensual by nature, OHAC, bored with own company, looking to make life a little more exciting with likeminded man. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 419219**

LINDA, 47, brown-eyed blonde, caring, loving and honest, many interests, seeks genuine male to share lonely evenings with. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 417211**

JOYCE, affectionate sensitive widow, bit of a romantic, seeks loving male for lots of TLC. Looks unimportant, it's what's in the heart that matters. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 419143**

DEBBIE, 29, looking for mature professional fun guy, 40-50 to spend good times with. Call me, you have nothing to lose. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 419075**

JULES, sensitive tactile, curvy brunette, hopeless romantic, seeks tall, loving male for fun, friendship and possible LTR. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 419033**

VIRGINIA, outgoing social female, 24, tall slim and attractive, looking for fun times, maybe more. Can accommodate/travel. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 418845**

HEATHER, well travelled solvent brunette looking to share a large glass of wine and whatever follows with affectionate man friend. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 419031**

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PAULINE, 49yrs, very attractive, curvy divorcee, affectionate and fun, seeks laid back, sincere male for an uncomplicated, loving relationship. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 418925**

LADY young at heart, nice eyes, seeks man 42-52 with good sense of humour. **Text only to Mailbox No: 4881572**

VIRGINIA, outgoing social female, 24, tall slim and attractive, looking for fun times, maybe more. Can accommodate/travel. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 418845**

LOOKING for the right chemistry with country loving gent who like me is looking for some extra fun in their life. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 418843**

JAN 35yr old blue eyed blonde, outgoing, friendly, WLTM passionate guy to share good wine, good conversation, flirting and fun times. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 418609**

SENSUAL tactile, attractive female, long blonde hair, blue eyes, loves travel, wining/dining, WLTM genuine male for mutual companionship. Looks unimportant. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 418587**

BROKEN hearted lady 39 seeks loving male to mend heart age 39/40. **Text only to Mailbox No: 4869116**

KAY, very young 45, fit and active, no ties, seeks similar young at heart, fun male for fun meets. Age/Status/looks unimportant. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 418577**

VIVACIOUS strawberry blonde who knows just what she wants, looking for caring male for spontaneous fun relationship. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 418445**

WENDY, 40, slim, fit, bubbly female looking to meet a tall, slim, fit, mature male who thinks he can keep up. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 418369**

JO 55, curvy redhead, loves eating out, theatre, travel, looking for middle-aged prince charming to sweep me off my feet. **Text only to Mailbox No: 4464905**

GENUINE lady looking for genuine male, age 58-60, for friendship and to have a laugh with. So if that's you would love to hear from you. **Text only to Mailbox No: 4537136**

PAT 66, attractive, N/S, likes reading, nights out, seeks gent for friendship, days out and more. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 418277**

68YR old widow, attractive, seeks sincere, N/S male, likes reading, meals out and walks. West Midlands. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 414773**

WENDY, 40, slim, fit, bubbly female looking to meet a tall, slim, fit, mature male who thinks he can keep up. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 418369**

EILEEN, slim green eyed brunette likes meals out and cosy nights in, seeks tall male who would make her laugh and brighten up her day. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 418347**

Men seeking women

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WAYNE, 40, cheeky, good career, likes gym. Looking for a lady who likes stimulating conversation and times. **Tel No: 0906 515 4345 Box No: 419829**

MICHAEL, school teacher, very shy and lonely, 42yrs, own home, car, seeks genuine caring lady. **Text only to Mailbox no: 4156561**

DARREN, 44, slim build, dark brown hair, green eyes, seeks genuine female for friendship, maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 418809**

HAPPY man 59 looking for a lady to share the good times. I enjoy cinema, eating out, pubs and holidays in hot places. **Text only to mailbox no: 4618385**

LONELY and broken male seeks female to show me what love is. **Text only to mailbox no: 5345658**

VERY useful, attractive 58 yr old, GSOH, six foot tall, nice build, n/s, genuine, tactile, fit and sporty, looking for a women for nights in and out. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 420135**

COLIN 61, lorry driver, 5'10", blue eyes, kind hearted, romantic, hobbies include growing fuchsia's for showing and I have a vintage tractor that I play with from time to time. Looking for similar who's up for a lot of fun. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 418463**

HANDSOMEguy, 49, seeks attractive, younger female for fun times. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 316752**

TALL dark, good looking male, 53, seeks attractive female for daytime fun and exciting times. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 393380**

ATTRACTIVE male, 54, seeks attractive female for daytime fun. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 407915**

TALL, dark, slim, attractive guy, 48, seeks attractive female for no strings fun times. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 299904**

ATTRACTIVE male, late 40's, seeks attractive female for fun times. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 311713**

TALL, dark, attractive guy 50, seeks attractive, tactile female for fun, excitement and lots of attention. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 314219**

COLIN, five foot eight, blue eyes, bundle of fun to be around, likes growing fuchsias for showing, vintage tractor for showing, weekends away, going out and staying in WLTM a lady for friendship/LTR. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 420089**

SHROPSHIRE male, 50, tall, dark, attractive, fun loving, seeks attractive female for fun and excitement. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 341387**

TALL attractive Shrewsbury male, 54, seeks attractive female for fun and excitement in the daytime. Discretion assured. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 411823**

COLIN 48, seeks cuddly large big beautiful woman 45 to 55 for LTR, love, romance, hopefully likes cuddles, kisses, holding hands. **Text only to Mailbox no: 5308886**

52YRS old guy genuine down to earth looking for Mrs right for nights in and out, walking, cooking, lives life to the full. **Text only to Mailbox no: 5331215**

WIDOWER 70 plus, seeking female for friendship. Love me love my dog. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 417439**

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MALE looking to meet a nice lady for fun times to spend with. I am 72 and would like to meet a lady between 60 and 70. **Text only to Mailbox no: 5332896**

PHILLIP, 29 years old, 5ft 11ins, stocky build, green eyes, friendly, GSOH, seeks genuine friendly n/s female for friendship, possible relationship. **Text only to Mailbox no: 5335424**

PHIL, 58, slim, OHAC, from Wolverhampton, looking for a fun lady for a no-strings relationship. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 420265**

GENUINE 56yr old male, divorced, OHAC, looking for nice lady for friendship, maybe more. Wolverhampton. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 405551**

CARING male, 57, OHAC, looking for female, any race, status and age for no strings discreet fun. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 411461**

STEVE 39, 5ft 9ins, medium build, likes walks, seeks female, slim-medium build, single mum welcome. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 396709**

PHIL 55, divorced, 5ft 10ins, slim, OHAC, seeks female, 18 plus for discreet adult fun. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 401875**

GENUINE male, 58, OHAC, looking for fun lady for no strings fun. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 417601**

PHIL 57, OHAC, discreet, seeks no strings fun with younger female. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 414991**

ADVENTUROUS 35yr old, slim, dark hair, likes music, cycling and photography, seeks female for friendship, maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 417235**

TALL attractive male, 55, would like to meet older mature women 60 to 75 for close discreet fun. You only live once. **Text only to Mailbox no: 4347071**

I am an easygoing guy looking for a female 55-66 for a meaningful relationship. I am very sincere and honest. **Text only to Mailbox no: 5326234**

MALE, 70, retired from NHS, seeking a lady for friendship and companionship. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 420147**

VERY useful, attractive 58 yr old, GSOH, six foot tall, nice build, n/s, genuine, tactile, fit and sporty, looking for a women for nights in and out. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 420135**

MATURE male, 50, medium-build, varied interests, seeks true Christian female, 35-45, who enjoys evenings in and dining out, for friendship or possibly more. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 419283**

STEVE 39, 5ft 9ins, medium build, likes walks, seeks female, slim-medium build, single mum welcome. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 396709**

6FT well built guy, nicely groomed looking for fun intimate nights or day with slim/medium build attractive lady 35-55. **Text only to Mailbox no: 5132460**

ALAN, 56 year old builder, muscular build, five foot ten, fit, likes the gym, pubs, clubs and days out, seeks female with similar interests. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 419975**

ATTRACTIVE, fit, sporty, tactile, youthful black male seek relationship with lady. N/S. **Text only to Mailbox no: 4851641**

WIDOWER, quiet, easygoing, slim, 5ft 7 tall, smart, varied interests, seeks slimish lady, 50 to 65 yrs for caring relationship. **Text only to Mailbox no: 4906469**

TIM, easygoing honest male, discreet, unihibited, seeks similar non-conformist averagely attractive, N/S female up to 65. Notts. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 375065**

SUBMISSIVE 44year old WLTM dominant female 25-30 years who enjoys role play with friendship and maybe possible relationship. **Text only to Mailbox no: 5084114**

MATURE male, 50, medium-build, varied interests, seeks true Christian female, 35-45, who enjoys evenings in and dining out, for friendship or possibly more. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 419283**

MARK 40, 5ft 9ins, brown hair/eyes, attractive, good looking, OHAC/business, likes walks, day trips, cinema, seeks similar female. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 348239**

PROFESSIONAL male, 41, own business, likes to enjoy life, clubs, pubs, cinema, gym, seeks similar female. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 360283**

MALE 45yrs old, self-employed motor trader/mechanic, medium build, green eyes, average looks. I am a nice genuine and honest person looking for similar lady to share a honest permanent relationship and happy times. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 418709**

Men seeking men

REMEMBER: Calls cost £1.55 per minute plus your phone company's access charge. Texts cost £1.50 per message received.

BI male, single widower, 58, seeks gay male friends near Tamworth. **Text only to Mailbox no: 4355756**

BI curious Gloucester guy 36, slim, married, WLTM gay or bi male aged 60 to 75 for fun times. **Text only to Mailbox no: 4930039**

BI male would like to meet same. 60 to 80 yrs. Must be able to accommodate. Coventry or Birmingham. **Text only to Mailbox no: 4931168**

TALL male 57, seeks older male 60 to 80 for adult fun. **Text only to Mailbox no: 4347071**

TOM young 59 attractive male, decent looking, fit, slimmish, good company & fun loving with many interests, seeking similar male. **Text only to Mailbox no: 4926340**

Women seeking Women

ATTRACTIVE full figure bi lady 58 seeks female of similar age for fun times. Cotswold area. **Text only to Mailbox No: 4636475**

36YR attractive black curvy female seeking boyish female local for relationship. **Text only to Mailbox No: 4483526**

FEMME Lesbian, blue eyes, brown hair, looking for femme. Age not important. **Text only to Mailbox No: 4847797**

Friends

LUKE 60's, seeking young Asian friend, 20-30's to socialise with. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 414841**

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Jackett: We are all on the same wavelength

WOLVES are lining up their January sales with boss Kenny Jackett insisting both he and the board are on the same page.

With Jackett calling for experienced players to help his young side in recent days, there appears to have been a change in tack from the 'young and hungry' signings model seen earlier this year. Either way, Wolves hope to add to their squad in the new year.

Polish winger Michal Zyro completed a £350,000 move from Legia Warsaw on Christmas Eve.

And defender Mike Williamson could be in line for a return to the club, with Newcastle United willing to offload the 32-year-old for a nominal fee.

Jackett refused to reveal which positions he is targeting new signings in, but said: "The board of directors want success as well. Yes, definitely, they do recognise it.

"Plans are in place to do something if possible.

"There is no doubt we're on the same page and want the same thing, which is success."

Jackett, who insists no club have yet made an inquiry or a bid for Benik Afobe said experience was needed to complement his young players.

"We have a lot of very good prospects at the club but obviously there's always a balance needed," he said.

"If those young players are okay on their own and they can keep coming through from our under-21 system, that's fine, but if at some stage you need to add experience to pull that together, that assessment needs to be made, and that's where I feel we are now."

Things turn ugly as Wolves find win

Wolves 1 Reading 0

IN football terms this was consequentialism in its purest form.

For half the game Wolves aspired to nothing more adventurous than sitting in their own third of the field and defending their fragile 1-0 lead.

Aesthetically, this was the equivalent of a rhino dancing the waltz. It was ugly, it was desperate, it was graceless.

But it was also necessary. And when all was said and done, Wolves won, ending their Molineux hoodoo in the process thanks to James Henry's 18th minute header.

Given the turmoil of the past two weeks, the ends surely justify the means? Wolves did get lucky though. Somehow, in what was an open and entertaining first half, Wolves' clean sheet remained intact, owing to a combination of some last-ditch blocks and Reading's profligacy.

Referee Simon Hooper also did them a favour by missing Dominic Iorfa's handball in the box.

Lead

But, on the flip side, Hooper also denied Wolves a spot-kick when Benik Afobe was brought down by Stephen Quinn in the penalty area.

Afobe also hit a post and Danny Batth went close in an even first half.

It was after the break, though, when the tactics took on a crude approach. Wolves had taken the lead in their previous four matches and won only one of those.

So on recent form it's a safe bet to suggest that if the Royals had levelled things up, they would have gone on to win the game.

All of which resulted in what resembled an attack versus defence training exercise.

Reading plundered 24 shots to Wolves' six. With just three of those on target, Carl Ikeme was largely untroubled, although that didn't stop him almost conceding through a horrible blunder when the ball slipped through his fingers.

Howe remembered as one of best ever

A FRIENDLY face off the pitch yet always deadly serious on it, Don Howe's personality gave Albion team-mates enough hints as to his likely future.

It wasn't just the dedication to his own position, or the fact that he, along with the likes of Jimmy Armfield and George Cohen, helped redefine what it meant to be a right-back.

Instead, it was the way he could analyse everyone else's role, giving suggestions on how they could improve.

Paying tribute after Howe's death at the age of 80, FA Cup winning skipper Graham Williams, who played on the opposite side of the pitch at left-back, said: "He was always talking about the game, coming up with ideas, things like that.

"He would sit me down and talk about the players I was going to be coming up against, how best to play them, what I could do. He would come up with things which would really amaze you."

Wolverhampton-born Howe's playing career was impressive enough, with more than 450 appearances for both Albion and then Arsenal, with 23 England caps.

Mentor

But it is in coaching where he left a lasting legacy and why so many of the poignant tributes contained words like 'visionary' – and why one of the most touching was delivered by current England boss and former Albion head coach Roy Hodgson.

Howe remained an inspiration to Hodgson, who described him as a "friend, coach and mentor".

"I found myself privileged to say he befriended me and I think it is a great loss and I am very sad," the England boss said.

"He was absolutely one of the very best coaches I have ever come across in my life and, certainly in my opinion, one of the very best coaches England ever had.

"He had a fantastic ability to convince you, to persuade you to think carefully about that game and take on a lot of the things he was putting forward.

"Now, with Don passing along with Bobby (Robson) and Dave (Sexton) in recent years, for me the trio of people that have had such a big effect on my coaching life have now all left us and I won't be able to enjoy their company and learn from them any more. He had a fantastic influence on so many players and an awful lot of coaches."

Don Howe during his days as a player with Albion

As Arsenal coach with Bobby Robson as Ipswich boss

"He was ahead of his time. He wasn't just a great coach, he was a great human being."

In addition to his time with Albion, Howe was involved with Arsenal for five decades, joining as a player in 1964 and going on to be coach, assistant manager, caretaker manager and eventually manager in 1984.

Although he failed to make an impact as West Brom manager, in 2004 he was named as one their 16 greatest players as part of their 125th anniversary celebrations. He also coached Leeds and managed Turkish giants Galatasaray.

He was a key figure in the England backroom coaching teams of Ron Greenwood, Robson and Venables and even in his later years was involved with the Football Association of Ireland.

And, he was part of one of the FA Cup's greatest ever upsets. In 1988, Wimbledon beat Liverpool to lift the trophy at a sunny Wembley. Howe was Dons boss Bobby Gould's sidekick.

Wolves legend Steve Bull has told of his sadness at Howe's death.

Bull, who was capped 13 times for England, played under Howe and boss Sir Bobby Robson as England reached the semi-finals in Italia 90.

He said: "I knew Don first-hand from our time with England, I had the pleasure of playing under him in the World Cup. He was brilliant. An absolute gentleman. Don will be very, very sadly missed."

Royal seal for Wolves second win on the trot

Charlton 0 Wolves 2

WELL who, apart from the Queen, saw this coming?

Her Majesty certainly did. On Christmas Day at 3pm she appeared to pledge her allegiance to the Wolves cause in her Christmas speech, referencing the club's famous motto by declaring to the nation that 'darkness has not overcome light'.

Lo and behold, 74 hours later, Wolves have two sorely-needed victories in the bag – and two clean sheets for good measure.

Coincidence? Maybe. But for Wolves and Kenny Jackett light has temporarily overcome darkness, and their season may have been saved as a result.

There has most definitely been light in recent weeks in the form of Jordan Graham, whose form would get the royal seal of approval.

Here he netted his first senior goal to give Wolves the lead – the sixth game in a row they've scored first – shortly after half time.

And then seven minutes from time came Graham's sixth assist in just his eighth Wolves appearance, a corner which was put past his own keeper by Harry Lennon, under pressure from Danny Batth.

This was by no means a one-man show, though.

As against Reading, Wolves defended for their lives, but here they did so with far more organisation and composure.

They also broke in numbers at every opportunity, particularly the breathless Conor Coady who excelled in a box-to-box role and covered a tremendous amount of ground, and were good value for their win.

Success for club's quartet of swimmers

FOUR Halesowen Swimming Club members travelled to the 10-lane Ponds Forge pool in Sheffield for the ASA National Winter meet.

The tough qualifying times meant that only the best in the country were able to attend.

Richard Spoor, aged 23, achieved gold in the 100m breaststroke and two silvers – at 50m and 200m.

Josh Bradley, 22, was superb in the 100m Individual Medley final coming eighth overall. He achieved a time of 57.11 seconds, beating his earlier heat time, which was a West Midlands Regional all time record.

Hannah Taleb, 18, swam in three finals and obtained seventh place in the 200m breaststroke, ninth in the 100m breaststroke and 10th in the 100m Individual Medley. Seventeen-year-old Chloe Finch came eighth in the 400m freestyle.

Tividale fail to threaten and fall short

Romulus 2 Tividale 0

TIVIDALE never did enough to threaten the home side in this Evo-Stik Division One South game.

After a dour first half, the deadlock was broken on 64 minutes when Romulus striker Joel Grandison was presented with a chance five yards outside the area and he rounded a stranded Tom Turner in goal to slot it into an empty net.

On 72 minutes the home side doubled their lead in rather fortuitous fashion when Louis Ezewele's low cross into the box came off Tividale skipper Jason Chilton's ankle and a completely wrong-footed Turner could only watch the ball roll into his net.

Monday's scheduled game at home to Market Drayton Town was called off.

Final whistle

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Stour in new year return to rugby pitch

STOURBRIDGE return to rugby action this weekend, travelling to Wakefield to meet Sandal on Saturday.

They embarked on the winter break by getting back to winning ways, retaining their place in the top three of National League Two North.

Storbridge bounced back from a three-point defeat at Sale in their previous encounter to beat second from bottom Luctonians 27-18 at home in their last match before Christmas.

Old Halesonians have an extended break and must wait a further week before they return to action. Their next game is on January 9, when they make the trip to Old Northamptonians, who are currently sitting in 12th position.

They entered the break with their fourth consecutive win in National League Three Midlands, overcoming torrential conditions as well as rivals Syston.

Luke Smith scored the all-important bonus try in the 22-8 victory.

Hales are currently holding on to second place on the table, 10 points adrift of leaders Hinckley, who have carried all before them so far this season and are currently unbeaten.

Dudley Kingswinford are also back in action on January 9 when they make the short trip to Walsall.

Before Christmas DK celebrated their third consecutive win as they welcomed fourth-placed Stratford-upon-Avon and ran out 60-12 winners.

The victory sees them eighth in the table, but such is the congestion above them that DK are only eight points behind leaders Burton.

In Midlands Two West (North), Stourbridge Lions host Kidderminster Carolians on January 9. Lions went into the festive break on the back of a 60-5 crushing of Handsworth.

Boss wants the Heathens back on track in 2016

CRADLEY HEATHENS co-boss Gary Patchett says he is determined to get his side back to winning ways in 2016.

The Heathens endured a tough campaign last season which saw them miss out on lifting any major silverware in the third tier.

But Patchett admits he couldn't be happier with how team building has gone ahead of next year and is confident his team will be strong contenders once again.

Patchett: said "We've got an attractive looking team and part of the interest is that we've got one or two unknowns in our side.

"I think we've got a team that will certainly get better and better as the season goes on.

"We're happy with the balance of the side and we're certainly on the warpath to get some silverware back next year." he added.

"I don't see any reason why our lads can't run any other team close in any competition."

Tributes to Honved hero Roy, 86

Legend Swinbourne

LEGENDARY Wolves centre forward Roy Swinbourne, who fired the team to their most famous victory and first league title, has died aged 86.

The striker's goals led Wolves to their first title in the 1953/54 season and provided the catalyst for their famous victory over Hungarian side Honved.

In his career, he made 230 appearances for the club, scoring 114 goals, between 1945 and 1957 and was inducted into the Wolves' Hall of Fame in 2011.

Former players and family members have paid tribute to the Yorkshire-born footballer, who retired following a knee injury in 1957 and passed away at a nursing home in Kidderminster following a long battle with vascular dementia.

Ron Flowers, who played with Roy during the club's most successful era, said: "Roy grew up just a village down from me and we both came through the Wath Wanderers set-up.

"He was a true gentleman, a perfect bloke and a really good influence to people around him."

After being forced to retire from the game in 1957 due to a knee injury, Roy worked as a rep for Wolverhampton tyre giant Goodyear, before starting his own successful Midlands-based tyre business.

His wife of 62 years, Betty, 83, added: "I am probably even prouder of Roy for making such a success of his life after being forced to retire from the game than I am of his achievements in sport. He was in a bad way when he had to stop playing – to pick himself up and do so well showed great strength."

Wolves' chief executive Jez Moxey described the former number nine as 'one of the club's most iconic footballers'.

JUSTIN TIME TO FIND WINNER

Rushall Olympic 1 Stourbridge 2

STOURBRIDGE came from behind to take the three points and condemn the Pics to a third straight league defeat.

The game was backed by a bumper crowd of 369 following the Glassboys' supporters' coach offer to Dales Lane.

The home side took the lead in the sixth minute as former Stourbridge player Luke Benbow sent in a low cross for Malachi Lavelle-Moore to turn in his second goal in three games.

Justin Richards shot wide for the visitors before Jake Heath and Kris Taylor both sent efforts off target for Rushall.

Stourbridge were level on 24 minutes after great work from Karl Hawley allowed Brian Smikle to tap into an empty net from close range.

The hosts almost got back in front as Dan Scarr forced a save from his own keeper Charlie Price and then Michael Townsend's header from the resultant corner was cleared off the line by Smikle.

Stourbridge made it 2-1 on 64 minutes when Richards blasted in from 10 yards despite appeals for offside from the home side.

Leon Broadhurst almost put Stourbridge two goals to the good when he volleyed towards goal from 25 yards, but his shot drifted just wide of the post.

Halesowen Town 2 Sutton Coldfield Town 2

ON-LOAN Shrewsbury Town striker Kaiman Anderson struck a brace as Halesowen twice came from behind to rescue a point.

Sutton took just four minutes to take the lead when Ryan Edmunds smacked a half-volley home off the far post after being set up by former Halesowen midfielder Aaron Forde.

Yeltz boss John Hill made a double substitution at the interval and the change paid off within seconds of the restart when a mistake in Sutton's central defence let in Anderson to slot an equaliser past James Wren.

Veteran Sutton substitute and former Halesowen striker Iyseden Christie marked his return to the Grove by restoring Sutton's lead with a 69th-minute header after Forde played a delightful reverse pass for Goddard to cross.

Jean-Michel Gueyes crossed for Anderson to head home his second goal of the game to make it 2-2 in the 89th minute.

Broadhurst derby day hero

Stourbridge 3 Halesowen Town 2

STOURBRIDGE snatched a heart-breaking late Boxing Day derby victory in front of 1,813 fans at the War Memorial Ground.

Sub Leon Broadhurst notched the winner after Mike Turner and Kaiman Anderson had twice given Halesowen the lead by scoring on their full debuts.

Referee Neil Radford was forced to make a key decision early on as Stourbridge goalkeeper Lewis Solly charged well out of his penalty area to handle above his head in the fourth minute after Anderson lobbed the home defence and looked set for a free run on goal. But Solly escaped with just a yellow card and Stourbridge survived to scramble clear after the resulting free-kick from Aaron Griffiths struck the base of the post.

The early drama continued as Halesowen capitalised on Stourbridge's shaky start by taking a seventh minute lead. Solly could only parry a shot from Danny Bragoli and the rebound fell for Turner to touch the opening goal into an empty net from within the six-yard box.

Poke

The Glassboys regained their composure to equalise after 12 minutes when Sean Geddes marked his Amblecote return by crossing from the left for Karl Hawley to hold off the Yeltz defence and turn in the area to poke home.

Ben Billingham fired over the Yeltz bar following a neat passing move in the 16th minute and Halesowen goalkeeper Shaun Rowley made a good 18th minute block after Hawley turned again in the area from Kris Green's throw-in.

At the start of the second half Billingham fired just wide for the Glassboys.

But the Yeltz soon regained a 51st minute lead against a suspect home defence when Anderson robbed Junior Smikle on the edge of the area and wriggled past several defenders without a meaningful challenge to find space to fire past Solly.

The visitors then conceded a right-wing free-kick and although Billingham's delivery was headed on and cleared off the line, substitute Leon Broadhurst was on hand to poke home the vital 85th minute winner.

Leon Broadhurst came off the bench to notch the winner for Stourbridge

Solly clutched Denny's 87th minute free-kick and there was further late drama when Solly's legs buckled under no challenge and the goalkeeper initially seemed destined to be stretchered off, with all three Stour substitutes already used. But Solly soldiered on and Stourbridge survived six minutes of stoppage time to claim all three points after Halesowen sent on substitute Joe Hull up front.

DK runners blow away the cobwebs

ATHLETES from Dudley Kingswinford Running Club took advantage of the opportunity to blow away the Christmas cobwebs by pinning a number to the vest and racing last weekend.

Only 48 hours after carving the festive turkey they were pounding the tarmac again, shedding calories and chasing personal bests.

The race, the Wheaton Aston 10k, is a standing Christmas dish. A well organised road race around the Staffordshire village hosted by Newport and District Running Club and run on a relatively flat course, along country lanes where there is always the possibility of a fast time provided you haven't overdone the Christmas excesses. With more than 500 runners toeing the line there were plenty hoping to burn off a mince pie or two and clock a quick time before the year end.

Fastest off all was Chris Perrin of Cannock & Stafford AC who claimed victory in 33.29, Laura Whittle was first lady and second overall, the Royal Sutton Coldfield AC athlete recording a time of 33.57 and former Kinver old boy, Peter Lighting, made the trip from Kent worthwhile to take third place in 34.10.

Of the blue hoops in attendance DK's Ben Foster finished just outside the podium places claiming foutth position in 34.42, Dave Norman was 39th in 39.03, Daren Thompson finished in 40.57 to take 58th place, Gary Bonner was 97th in 43.05, Andy Litchfield was 134th in 45.10, John Andrews was 163rd in 46.35, Rory Campbell finished in 48.16 in 185th, Liz Hettle was 192nd in 48.40Dave Garbutt was 196th in 49.07, Natalie Litchfield was 342nd in 56.46, Sam Hemming was 364th in 58.10, Meg Down 367th in 58.19, Gina Collins 396th in 58.25, Sarah Collison 379th in 58.50, Jane Campbell 381st in 58.46.

Glassboys reduce admission prices

STOURBRIDGE FC have reduced admission prices for their annual Community Day match this weekend.

The Glassboys take on Ramsbottom United at the War Memorial Athletic Ground in the Evo-stik League Premier Division on Saturday.

As a thank you for the support the club has received so far this season, particularly during their memorable FA Cup run, adult admission will be £5, while entry for senior citizens and juniors aged 16-18 years of age will be £3.

Under 16s will be admitted free of charge when accompanied by an adult. Kick off is at 3pm.

★★★

The Chronicle, a Midland News Association Ltd publication, printed by the company at Ketley, Telford.
Thursday, December 31, 2015

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